NOVA PRAXIS

Mike McConnell

NOVA PRAXIS

Things have changed. We have changed.

Earth is lost to us, but even in the aftermath of this terrible tragedy, we grow, evolve and even prosper. We have witnessed the death of our mother and the birth of a new era.

In what might have been the end, the synthesis of biology and technology proved our salvation. Augmentation, ranging from basic genetic manipulation to Apotheosis, set us on the path of prosperity. But it also emphasized the importance of identity, individual humanity, and the purity of the species.

The loss of Earth and the resulting Exodus gave us an opportunity to start over with a clean slate. And we seized it.

Though the need for organization, stability and a reliable government was clear, the old ways were seen by most as archaic, clumsy and too prone to corruption.

It was time for a new way… a Nova Praxis.

Today, social networks allow the will of the people to be measured instantly, accurately and without the need for representation. The Coalition, guided by the collective voice of its people, has established new homes on worlds lit by new suns. Molecular assembly technology has made it possible for society to provide a quality of life never before imagined, at essentially no cost, to everyone. And we are virtually immortal.

But can this would-be Utopia last?

Corruption in the Coalition government fosters decay from within. The Houses, our benefactors and patrons, run shadowy networks of intrigue, espionage and assassination. Apostates, non-citizens, condemn those who would trade their privacy for the Coalition's false security. Remnants of Earth's old governments wage an unrelenting guerilla war on Coalition forces. Ideological extremists commit acts of terror using the latest horror to spring from a factory or test

Nova Praxis is…

…a table-top role-playing game featuring an evolution of the award winning FATE game system utilized in Strands of Fate and FATE Core; streamlined and tailored specifically for the Nova Praxis setting.

…self-contained. You do not need to own, or be familiar with, any other FATE game to play Nova Praxis.

…a relatively "hard sci-fi" setting that takes place in the aftermath of a short lived technological singularity.

…an exploration of the tropes of transhuman sci-fi. Mind uploading, resleeving, AI characters, and body augmentation.

…an exploration of the societal impact of a reputation based post-scarcity economy.

…a game in which players play characters who know how to slip between the cracks of civilization and perform the jobs their patrons would rather keep off the books.

…a setting full of conflict. The Houses wage a secret Shadow War against each other, purist and transhuman ideologies erupt in violence, and apostates lash out against the oppression of the Coalition government.

…home to railguns, powered armor, star ships, security drones, bipedal war frames, swarms of nanomachines, kill-sats, and the horrors of accelerated evolution gone wrong.

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FATE

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VERSION 1.1

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Nova Praxis is my baby. It was a seed, planted in my mind four years ago. And it sat there, germinating, through the development of *Strands of Fate* and *Strands of Power*.

Now, at last, it sees the light of day.

The development of *Nova Praxis* has been an interesting journey for me. It forced me to look at the world in new ways, consider things I had not previously considered, and question my beliefs in ways that were not always very comfortable.

Such is the way of *Nova Praxis*. It's about rethinking the world, looking to the future, and trying to see a path that leads to salvation instead of destruction. Topics like the singularity, post scarcity societies, and transhumanism require a lot of consideration of some pretty touchy subjects. Technology as savior and destroyer, Capitalism vs. Socialism, humanity, the soul, religion... It's deep stuff.

So I want to take a moment to say thank you to my friends and family, who had to put up with my mad ravings, late nights, and hermit lifestyle.

And a very special thanks to my lovely wife and beautiful daughter.

Mike McConnell

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First Printing

OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Things have changed. We have changed.

Earth is lost to us, but even in the aftermath of this terrible tragedy, we grow, evolve, and even prosper. We have witnessed the death of our mother and the birth of a new era.

In what might have been the end, the synthesis of biology and technology proved to be our salvation. Augmentation, ranging from basic genetic manipulation to Apotheosis, set us on the path of prosperity. Even more, these advances reinforced the importance of identity, individuality, and what it means to be human.

The loss of Earth and the resulting Exodus gave us an opportunity to start over with a clean slate. And we seized it.

The need for organization, stability, and a reliable government was clear, but the old ways came to be viewed by the survivors as archaic, clumsy, and too easily corrupted.

It was time for a new way…a Nova Praxis.

Today, social networks allow the will of the people to be measured instantly, accurately, and without the need for representation. The Coalition, guided by the collective voice of its people, has established new homes on worlds lit by new suns. Molecular assembly technology has made it possible for society to provide a quality of life never before imagined, at essentially no cost, to everyone. And we are virtually immortal.

But can this would-be utopia last?

Corruption in the Coalition government fosters decay from within. The Houses, our benefactors and patrons, run shadowy networks of intrigue, espionage, and assassination. Apostates, who refuse citizenship in the Coalition, condemn those who would trade their privacy for the Coalition’s false security. Remnants of Earth’s old governments wage a guerilla war on Coalition forces. Ideological extremists commit acts of terror using the latest horror to spring from a factory or test tube…

And the value of a human soul is weighed and measured in lines of code.

Nova Praxis is a post-singularity sci-fi setting that explores transhumanism and post-scarcity societies against a backdrop of action, adventure, conspiracy, and intrigue.

Nova Praxis is…

…a tabletop role-playing game featuring an evolution of the award winning FATE game system used in Strands of Fate, streamlined and tailored specifically for Nova Praxis.

…self-contained. You do not need to own, or be familiar with, any other FATE game to play Nova Praxis.

…a relatively "hard sci-fi" setting that takes place during the aftermath of a short-lived technological singularity.

…an exploration of the tropes of transhuman sci-fi: mind uploading, resleeving, artificial intelligence, and augmentation.

…an exploration of the societal impacts of a reputation-based post-scarcity economy.

…a game in which players play characters who slip between the cracks of civilization and perform jobs their patrons would rather keep off the books.

...a setting full of conflict. The Houses wage a secret Shadow War against each other, purist and transhuman ideologies clash violently, and apostates rebel against the oppression of the Coalition government.

...home to railguns, powered armor, starships, security drones, bipedal warframes, swarms of nanomachines, kill-sats, and the horrors of accelerated evolution gone wrong.

WHAT HAS COME BEFORE...

In the year 2042, the exponentially accelerating rate of technological advancement finally gave way to an event that historians call The Singularity. This event was marked by the birth of a truly sentient artificial intelligence capable of reasoning, creativity, and self-motivation.

This being, called Mimir, mysteriously shut down after only a short period of activity. Brief though its existence may have been, it left behind a legacy of advanced knowledge—seeds of the next technological revolution. This event resulted in a massive paradigm shift, a new era in which advancements were made by picking up the breadcrumbs left behind by a dead machine of godlike intellect.

Yet even as we prospered, new technologies gave way to new challenges. More efficient automated manufacturing techniques eventually grew into macro-factories and nanomaterial fabrication systems that largely removed the need for physical labor. This, along with many other developments, caused unemployment rates to skyrocket worldwide.

In time, even the harshest critics of social welfare programs found themselves unable to offer alternatives. Millions were without jobs, yet the resources needed to provide them with safe and happy lives sprouted in abundance.

Currency values plummeted. The world's economies and political power structures began a seemingly unstoppable decline into chaos. All seemed lost, but salvation eventually emerged in the form of new economies not driven by the traditional concepts of supply and demand.

It was not only societal constructs that underwent massive changes, but also humanity itself. Advances in augmentation technology eventually led to a form of immortality—a process called Apotheosis—that allowed us to transform the conscious mind into a type of artificial intelligence: software that could persist forever.

Even more, what could be done for the mind could be done for the body. A process called Synthesis created a union of man and machine, an interweaving blend of biological and synthetic life.

Some even gave up the flesh entirely to live in fully synthetic bodies, or as purely digital entities in a virtual environment.

Extreme augmentation and genetic manipulation offered hope for some, but inspired fear in others. Movements arose to codify the meaning of "human." Laws were passed to maintain the purity of humanity,

ensuring that the species did not diverge, and to protect those who would eschew augmentation from obsolescence. In time, these laws became a hotbed of debate as Purists argued for humanity's legacy while transhumanists fought for the right to alter their bodies as they saw fit.

Yet, despite all the wonders of this new technological renaissance, man continued to fall prey to his baser instincts. Political upheaval gave way to a global war that raged across the planet for decades. Millions died. In the end, though, the greatest casualty was Mother Earth herself. The planet was consumed by a technological horror, and mankind fled to the stars in a mass evacuation that came to be called the Exodus.

Scattered and desperate, people turned to the corporations for leadership. Even before the Exodus, tens of thousands of people had already left Earth to pursue the off-world interests of corporate backers looking for an edge. After the loss of Earth and the collapse of its governments, it fell to the corporations to guide the fate of humanity.

In time, the largest corporations grew to become what we now know as the Houses. These voluntary corporate governments then came together to form a Consociationalist governing body called the Coalition.

Made up of a Council of Senators from each of the six Houses, the Coalition codifies and enforces the will of its citizens. As humanity begins to spread throughout the galaxy, their journey is guided by the combined efforts of the Coalition and the individual efforts of the Houses.

But all is not well…

The remnants of Earth's old governments plant seeds of rebellion at the edges of explored space. Advanced technologies give way to terrible new dangers. The Houses wage a Shadow War against each other while attempting to maintain a façade of unity.

Worse, the debate over the definition of humanity has begun to grow violent.

ELEMENTS OF NOVA PRAXIS

Post-Singularity

The technological singularity is defined as the moment when the exponential acceleration of technological advancement outpaces humanity's ability to keep up with it, or even understand it.

In Nova Praxis, the singularity was heralded by the birth of a special kind of artificial general intelligence called a dynamic creation engine. The AI was capable of thinking at a rate roughly ten thousand times faster than a human mind. It never forgot, never needed rest, and could accurately simulate its theories and ideas without need for interaction with the real world.

This AI, called Mimir, is responsible for the vast majority of the miraculous technological advancements that help define the Nova Praxis setting. Before it mysteriously shut down, Mimir paved the way for molecular assemblers, faster-than-light travel, artificial gravity, virtually unlimited clean energy, and lossless human brain emulation.

Mimir's discoveries resulted in a paradigm shift in the way humans developed new technologies. Before Mimir, technology improved by using the tools of yesterday to create the tools of tomorrow, resulting in technological growth at an exponential rate. Now, after Mimir, new technologies are instead developed by deciphering Mimir's Archive; within which are the logs of its discoveries, theories, and inventions.

Mimir-tech is the common term used to refer to technology developed by Mimir, though this term is rarely used as pretty much all modern technology now stems from Mimir. While Mimir-tech devices cannot be patented, any information extracted and deciphered from the Archives becomes a closely held secret by those who did it. It often takes tens of thousands of man-hours sifting through Mimir's Archives before enough information can be pieced together for a new discovery. So naturally, this sort of information is tightly guarded.

Though widely used, much of how Mimir-tech devices function is still a bit of a mystery. These devices are several orders of magnitude more complex than pre-singularity human systems, so much so that no single person can fully understand them. Experts generally only understand portions of a Mimir-tech system, small modules designed by Mimir to be "human friendly" and open to customization and repurposing.

Mimir-tech computers run on quantum processors, store seemingly endless amounts of data on hybrid crystalline-DNA decks, and are virtually impossible to hack. Each is outfitted with a low-level AI specifically designed to detect and deter unauthorized intrusions. These AIs can react millions of times faster than a would-be human hacker, and respond accordingly.

Of course, this level of security is necessary. Everything runs on computer systems. Door locks, sensor arrays, pressure seals, gravity generators, data transmissions, lights, speakers—it all runs on computers, forming a network called a mesh.

Post-Scarcity

Post-singularity technology changed the way humans live in many ways, but perhaps no single invention had a greater impact on society than the molecular assembler. Called compilers, these devices are capable of building finished goods from raw materials, assembling them at the atomic level.

Forks, plates, weapons, electronic devices, and even food can be compiled from the raw materials fed into the machine, reducing the labor and shipping costs of production to zero. With a stable system of raw matter dispensation, most items can be produced on demand at nearly no cost.

Compilers are incredibly common in Coalition society, and one only needs the proper template software to create almost anything. These templates are linked to a citizen's Coalition Identification, and records are kept of everything he or she compiles. Restricted items such as weapons can't be compiled without the proper licenses.

As one might expect, widespread use of compilers devastated the world economy, necessitating drastic change. When the Houses founded the Coalition, they used this opportunity to establish a new economy based—not on goods or materials—but on reputation and favors.

In time, multiple attempts at reputation (Rep) tracking systems eventually merged into a single government agency called Inter-Rep. Monitored through the mesh by powerful AIs, this system attempts to quantify a citizen's contributions to society and the value of his or her opinion. This rating is established as people rate each other, offering a bump when they like someone or a hit when they don't. Rep can also be exchanged like currency for favors or highly valued goods.

The higher your Rep, the more you are able to take from society before suffering a Rep hit, the greater the value of your bumps and hits, and the greater the value of your vote.

For better or worse, this system is also used to measure privilege in other ways. For example, some exclusive clubs require a minimum Rep-Rating to be allowed in. Depending on which House you belong to, you'll find certain items require a lesser Rep-Rating to acquire.

Apostates, those who live outside the influence of the Coalition, do not have a Rep-Rating. They must get by on bartering or through the use of illegal gold currency.

The Fall of Earth

In time, Earth's major nations split into two warring factions, the Alliance and Federation. The Consolidation Wars, as they came to be called, ended with the release of the most devastating weapon the human race has ever known.

It was thought that unleashing the technophage on the Alliance capital would shock Alliance forces into surrendering. It worked, but not as intended.

The Federation government claimed it had only meant to destroy the Alliance capital, Brasilia. But for reasons unknown, instead of responding to the shutdown command it began attacking anything and everything. It consumed everything it could make use of, grew, and kept growing.

The technophage swarmed over the world; the rolling mass of nanomachines ripped cities and people apart at the molecular level, assembling usable base materials into autonomous war machines. The gray fog left only dust and nightmares in its wake.

The Consolidation Wars ground to a halt as both sides worked to defeat, or at least contain, the spreading blight. But it was too little, too late. The governments of Earth effectively collapsed. Entire nations that lacked the necessary weapons to fight the nanoswarm were lost. Even developed nations took tremendous casualties as the swarm adapted by building new drones outfitted with specially tailored defense systems. It soon became clear that any hope of survival lay in retreat.

With Earth's governments scattered and broken, the corporations of the world stepped in by directing their vast resources to aid the evacuation. Millions fled during the Exodus, but many billions were lost.

Now, Earth lies under quarantine. None are allowed to return home for fear that the technophage might spread.

Rise of the Houses

After the fall of Earth, its survivors were scattered, desperate and disorganized. Their governments had all but collapsed, and what remained was weakened and ultimately powerless.

As a result, the people found themselves looking to their saviors, the corporations, for guidance. Most were living on ships or colonies owned by the corporations during this time, and simply had no other authority to turn to.

This era of desperation and confusion eventually led to the formation of a new government. The corporations began to band together into larger, more effective ruling bodies. The largest of the corporate micro-governments, six in total, came together to charter a new nation that would encompass the whole of humanity. The corporations came to be called the Houses, and together they became the Coalition of Free States.

Every registered Coalition citizen is a member of a House, which fills the role of both local government and employer. The Houses enforce both the laws of the Coalition, and a set of House Laws that vary from House to House.

The Houses structure and govern themselves in different ways. Some are more business-like, while others take a more feudal approach. Unlike the nations of old, the Houses do not recognize borders; regardless of where you are, you are expected to obey the laws of the Coalition and your own House.

As corporations, the Houses operate all businesses in the Coalition. While each House has different markets they specialize in, citizens can file to establish subsidiary companies that may produce or provide any sort of legal product or service. It is because of these subsidiaries that every House has ended up with at least some small stake in nearly every market.

Utopian Prison/Dystopian Freedom

Because of the wealth of resources available to it, and the lack of available jobs requiring human labor, the Coalition provides its citizens with the option to default.

Citizens who default generally provide little of value to society. They don't work and they don't provide many favors to others. They may or may not create items of art or value. If they do, they do so at their own pace. The Rep-Rating of a person who defaults may never climb very high, but so long as they avoid being a problem they can live out the remainder of their life never really doing anything they don't want to do.

To many, this is paradise. But not to all…

Coalition cities, habitats, and homes sport nearly ubiquitous surveillance technology. The ARIS strips, the same technology that provides the interface between your devices (and/or augmentations) and the local mesh, also function as the eyes and ears of AI Monitors that watch your every move.

Coalition citizens have grown accustomed to this and most never give it much thought. It is the price they pay to be a citizen, and most are happy to pay it. Their needs are met, they are protected, and they are free to enjoy whatever legal forms of entertainment they wish.

There are some, however, to whom this invasion of privacy is simply intolerable. And it is this belief that drives some to flee.

Apostates, as non-citizens are often called, value their privacy and choose to live outside the Coalition system. They live on ships, secret space stations, or enclaves on planets the Coalition deemed unworthy of colonization. Without access to compilers, apostates must get food, clothing, and other necessities the old-fashioned way. It's a harder life, but it is a life free of the ever-watching eyes of the Coalition.

Conspiracy and Intrigue

As one might expect, the Coalition does not take kindly to those who would live outside its laws.

Usually, confirmed apostates are arrested on sight. But while it's far from public knowledge, the Houses regularly work with talented apostates and apostate factions when it suits them: granting them access to equipment and supplies in exchange for favors best kept off the books.

The Houses, as organizations founded upon competition, do not always work with the best intentions of the other Houses in mind. What appears on the surface to be civil and respectful competition between the Houses is, in truth, just a thin veneer of civility drawn over the bloody and brutal Shadow War. The Houses—each and every one—employ kidnapping, assassination, torture, theft, blackmail, and a laundry list of other shady or outright illegal operations to gain an advantage over the other Houses. And it's not uncommon for different subsidiaries within the same House to employ the same tactics against each other.

The soldiers in this war are apostates or citizens who know how to slip through society's cracks. These mercenaries, called Auxiliaries, run jobs for the Houses that range from unethical to outright condemnable, and are made up of individuals from all walks of life. Pure, sleeved, SIM, citizen, apostate—their affiliations and philosophies rarely matter so long as they are willing to uphold the terms of their contracts.

And the public at large has no idea.

The Houses have an unspoken agreement that the Shadow War will remain hidden from the public eye. Citizens of the Coalition have powerful voting rights, and the Rep system insures that only popular politicians remain in power. Disorganization and infighting within the Coalition damages the illusion of safety and comfort provided to the people. These

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acts could lead to instability, discontent, and unpopular politicians. And nobody wants that.

Thus, the Houses will even work to cover up their rivals' indiscretions to maintain the illusion. They will expect to be compensated, of course, and much shame falls on the House that forces its enemies to clean up its mess.

Still, the Shadow War and apostate crackdowns aren't the only sources of bloodshed in the galaxy. While a growing number of people join the transhumanist movement each year, a larger number still stands in opposition. The Humanity Preservation Act (HPA) was put into law by Purists who feared what transhumans might eventually become. The Purists, generally eschewing augmentation technology for one reason or another, feared that transhumans would relegate them to an inferior species—or worse, enslave them.

The HPA limits the degree to which a person can change his or her body and restricts how SIMs can operate. It seeks to avoid the splitting of the human race into divergent subspecies and assures that pure humans remain competitive.

While the majority of citizens are relatively content with the current state of the HPA, there are extremists on both sides. Those backing a more extreme posthuman agenda seek to push the human mind and body beyond what the law allows. Some seek to transform themselves into genetically engineered monstrosities, distributed-intelligence drone swarms, or any number of other things along their "path to ascension."

At the other end of the spectrum, Purifiers plant bombs in resleeving facilities, chop off people's cyberware limbs, and rip out their mnemonic cores. They view transhumans as cheaters or "desecrated," and many see those who have undergone Apotheosis as nothing more than soulless shells.

The Last Frontier

While Earth may be lost, humanity now thrives on over a dozen planets, and millions live their lives on smaller colonies or space stations.

One of Mimir's greatest gifts to humanity was technology that allowed for the folding of space through the creation of jump gates, making instantaneous travel possible.

While nearly impossible to use in the gravity well of a planet, jump gates can be created in space to allow ships to travel vast distances, bridging the gap of a few light-years in seconds. Jump-capable ships and a public gate network make it possible to travel between star systems.

However, jump gates suffer from a minimum jump distance that makes using them to travel within a star system impractical. Inter-system travel is done using sub-light engines. These engines, while incredibly fast, still require days-long commutes between planets.

Aboard a ship, gravitic technology is used to provide gravity equal to that of Earth. The ships are powered by APEX reactors capable of supplying nearly unlimited energy by harnessing the power of matter/antimatter reactions.

Augmented and Virtual Reality

In the time of *Nova Praxis*, computers are everywhere. Even the poorest apostate enclaves feature nearly ubiquitous computer and sensor system meshes. Yet, even as computers are everywhere, you probably wouldn't notice them.

Gone are the keyboards and mice. Even touch screens and holographic displays are relics of a bygone era. Interaction with computer systems is accomplished almost exclusively via direct brain interface, gesture-based augmented reality or virtual reality immersion.

Augmented Reality (AR)

Glasses, contact lenses, entoptic augmentations, or cybernetic replacements can allow the user to see computer-generated data called augmented reality objects (AROs) overlaid virtually upon the world around you.

Those with a mindset (described in the next section) have this data fed directly into their visual cortex.

AROs can highlight interesting features in the user's environment, display public profiles about the people they meet or things they see, or show any other sort of information that might be relevant about the user's location or activities.

Your augmented reality system may adorn a blank wall with an ARO painting, or play a video in a windowpane. A plain stone floor in an empty room might appear to you as a lush garden. Your friend on another planet might appear to walk along beside you as you converse, shown as a telepresence ARO sent via the Extranet.

When used as a computer interface, an ARO version of a keyboard or other type of interfacing device might appear before the user. The user can't feel the object, of course, but the local mesh sensors track the user's movements and translate them into input.

Alternatively, neural mapping systems can be worn that translate thoughts into computer input. These devices are usually called links, and often take the form of a small device clipped over the ear, a hat, or a headdress. Like a mindset, a link allows the user to mentally issue commands to a computer. This technology makes other types of interfacing devices, real or ARO, largely unnecessary.

That being said, neural links require a certain level of focus, so other interfacing devices are still commonly used in distracting or chaotic environments.

Virtuality (VR)

The possibilities of AR are vast, but they still depend on elements of the real world. Virtual environments, however, do not suffer that limitation.

Nicknamed the Infinite Frontier, virtual environments are incredibly popular. Those who use virtual environments employ a special type of link, called an ego channel, which hijacks their brain signals, replacing them with a stream of virtual data. Those with a mindset can already do this without needing an ego channel.

Whether by ego channel or mindset, the end result is total immersion into a virtual world.

Virtualities range from the fantastic and strange to environments so realistic that they cannot be distinguished from the real world.

Transhumanity

Even before the birth of Mimir, humanity was already making great strides in the realms of biotechnology and genetic manipulation. However, Mimir's contributions to these fields resulted in an explosion of potential when it introduced the procedures for Apotheosis and Synthesis.

During Apotheosis, a colony of nanomachines is introduced into the brain via a series of injections. The whole process takes about a week, during which time the nanomachines systematically destroy and replace the majority of the brain cells in the recipient's cerebrum. The replacement of a single brain cell has no effect on the person. During Apotheosis, though, billions of brain cells are replaced one by one with nanomachines that carry out the functions of the replaced cells.

Apotheosis, once complete, results in a mesh of networked nanomachines called a mindset. It's impossible to pinpoint the exact moment this transition happens, but slowly—

and almost imperceptibly—the mind is transformed into software.

The mindset interfaces directly with the mind and can superimpose information directly over the user's senses. It also features a low-level AI called an Agent, which manages the user's calendar, incoming and outgoing messages, social networks, and whatever else the user requires.

Perhaps most importantly, the mindset monitors the user's memories and stores a real time backup of his mind in a special nanocluster called a mnemonic core. The mnemonic core can be extracted from the body and used to upload the mind into another body called a sleeve. This process can be done in the event of death, or if the person simply wants a new sleeve.

The Synthesis process does for the body what Apotheosis does for the mind. Trillions of nanomachines are introduced into the body, weaving through living tissue to form a mesh of biological and synthetic cells. This hybrid of organic and synthetic life is far more durable than a normal human body and can be monitored and controlled far more precisely.

Synthesis represents a harmonic merger of man and machine—organic and synthetic life in balance. Those who have undergone Synthesis are held up by many as examples of transhumanity and the potential of the human race.

These views differ a bit from the popular opinion of posthumans who exist purely as software or who inhabit fully synthetic sleeves. Many no longer consider them to be human.

It is estimated that roughly 35% of humanity has undergone Apotheosis, and 7% has undergone Synthesis. Even those who haven't have likely been augmented in some way, though. Gene treatments are performed in the womb, elective cybernetic and biological augmentations are all the rage, and new evolutionary philosophies arise each day.

Savants

Like all modern technology, the mindset was developed by Mimir. As with most augmentation technology, it comes with a number of restrictions put in place by the Humanity Preservation Act. These restrictions ensure that the Apotheosized can't use the mindset to enhance themselves beyond human limits. Thus, even with a mindset, the mind still forgets, dreams, struggles with unwanted emotions, and more.

There are some, however, who have discovered the key to bypassing these restrictions. Doing this is a very dangerous process, as it requires editing the code that comprises the mind itself. Those who have accomplished this are known as Savants.

Some Savants say that they found a backdoor into the mindset's core programming; though, if that were true, it would be the only Mimir-tech system to ever be hacked by a human mind. Still others believe that Mimir left a backdoor open on purpose so that those humans worthy of doing so could achieve freedom.

Most Savants claim that the key to cracking the system differs from person to person; likely this is because each mind is different, thus each mind's code is different. Whatever the case may be, a Savant cannot teach another person how to crack their own mindset's restrictions; they must figure it out for themself.

Once the mindset is cracked, the Savant can begin writing a special type of computer code they call Self-Interfacing Neural Code (SINC). This code is used to compile programs that allow Savants to pit their Daemon, what Savants call an unrestricted Agent, against the security AIs of other computers.

This attack can result in short-term access to the targeted computer system, granting the Savant control over it and whatever the computer is responsible for controlling.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ Log: 03:45-03,18,97]

[Alexei] – Write me off as paranoid if you want, but you know what I'm talking about.

[Reagan] – Log off Alexei. You need sleep.

[Alexei] – No I don't. And I couldn't sleep even if I tried. What Taggert said is gnawing at me.

[Jane] – He said, "Don't let them leave this place alive." That's why I drilled him and put one through his core.

[Alexei] – No, not that. Before that. He was talking about conflict between Houses. How often do they hire crews like us? Is there something bigger going on here? Something deeper and more prolific than the bickering we see on the surface?

[Jane] – Paranoid. He was bent. He tried to kill us. And for what? What would he have gained by trying to kill us?

--[[Unauthorized System Access Detected]]--

[Unknown] – Nothing. Alexei is right.

[Jane] – Who the fuck are you?

[Reagan] – Log off! NOW!

--[Reagan is offline]

--[Jane is offline]

[Alexei] – Malpheus?

[Unknown] – Hello Alexei.

THE TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Pre-Singularity

- The Curiosity rover lands on Mars.
- Technological advances, particularly in the fields of 3D printing and robotics, lead to further destabilization of the already struggling global job market.
- Hundreds of millions find themselves out of jobs.
- In the face of growing unemployment, many governments are forced to seek ways to better supplement their citizen's standard of living.
- "Exponential technologies" lead to quantum computing, powerful and reliable artificial intelligence, and vastly improved medical procedures.
- Breakthroughs in nanoscale material fabrication and in power storage and management systems allow for more efficient space travel. The Mars expedition is led by American scientist and astronaut, Alexander Brown. Petra Gregor, a Russian, is the first human to step onto the surface of Mars.
- Lunar Base Station 1, or Luna, becomes fully functional.
- Advances in food production, water purification, and solar energy enhance the lives of millions in poorer countries.
- In a British lab, the marriage of nanotech and advanced biotech results in the first cybernetic limb capable of responding to thought and stimulus with the same efficiency and sensitivity as a real flesh-and-bone limb.
- Elective genetic augmentations become legal in most countries.
- Work begins on Project Mimir.

0 PS (The Technological Singularity)

- Mimir, a type of AGI called a dynamic creation engine (DCE), becomes self-aware. It rapidly improves upon its own design and makes thousands of amazing scientific discoveries. After only a few months, it mysteriously shuts down.
- Humanity scrambles to make sense out of the discoveries and inventions Mimir made while active.
- DCEs such as Mimir are declared "extinction-level" weapons of mass destruction and "global threats."

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1-3 PS (2043-2045 AD)

- The first year of the Post-Singularity calendar.
- The NASA probe Poseidon discovers a jellyfish-like creature beneath the ice of Europa. The scientific community is pressured to investigate further.
- Several UN countries come together to plan the launch of an exploration team from Luna.
- The United Nations Explorations Directive (UNED) is formed to act as humanity's guide for space exploration.
- By this time, most diseases can be cured and the average lifespan is 180 years.

4-8 PS (2046-2050 AD)

- This period is one of transition and restructuring as old economic models crumble and a new economic model begins to gain footing in an increasingly post-scarcity world. This new economic system first takes hold in European first world countries. It is called the Rep-Reward system, which grants rewards and privileges that are above the default standard of living based on what you contribute to society.
- Lacking the technological infrastructure required to support the Rep-Reward system, the poorer nations still hold to more traditional economic models, such as the use of currency or bartering. Although technically illegal, bartering remains a common practice even among citizens of first world nations, especially those with lower Rep-Ratings.
- An expedition team lands on Europa and gathers samples of alien life. Scientists studying the alien creatures discover that they seemingly evolved from single-celled organisms into complex life in less than ten thousand years.
- The discovery of complex alien life has a unification effect on the people of Earth. There is a worldwide push to fund any technologies related to space exploration. Governments begin forging new alliances in an effort to share resources to fund any and all space programs; this time is referred to as the Space Craze of the '40s.
- The first of many drafts of the Earth Unification Act (EUA) is proposed and rejected. The EUA is pushed primarily by poorer countries to unify Earth under a single government.
- The first lunar labs open for private industrial use. Luna becomes the host for many dangerous experiments due to its ability to easily quarantine dangerous accidents.

9-10 PS (2051-2052 AD)

- Construction begins on the first space elevator, nicknamed The Beanstalk.
- Another draft of the EUA is presented. Although it fails again, it is taken more seriously than before. The success of the UNED inspires many nations to combine efforts for the good of mankind. Negotiations begin around the world to determine whether or not any sort of planet-wide unification is realistic, and what steps need to be taken to make it a reality.
- Broadcast power technology matures to the point where batteries and cables are no longer necessary for most powered items as long as they remain within a generator's broadcast field. Most cities are completely covered by government-maintained broadcast power fields.

11-18 PS (2053-2060 AD)

- Under the direction of the UNED, a team of Japanese scientists are able to create a reliable cold fusion reactor. This discovery, one of many unearthed from Mimir's Archive, solves one of the main problems with space travel and colonization: power generation and its resulting waste.
- Transhumanist movements explode in popularity. The genome becomes the medium of choice for a new kind of artist.
- The first cold fusion reactors quickly hit the market for commercial consumption. The technology is developed and marketed by a new multi-national group formed to spread

the use of efficient, clean energy to the whole world.

- The abundant energy provided by cold fusion, coupled with some of Mimir's other discoveries, allows for the creation of the first devices to utilize gravitic technology. These devices can create artificial gravity, or generate anti-gravity to provide lift.
- Another version of the Earth Unification Act fails by only a small margin. Seventeen countries continue to maintain their independence from the growing number of nations supporting the merger. Among the more adamant naysayers are the United States, Switzerland, Brazil, and Germany.

19-24 PS (2061-2066 AD)

- The first cold fusion-powered spacecraft goes on line. Much larger than anything before it, the Archangel houses a crew of forty-two men and women from different nations. In addition to the first cold fusion starship drive, the Archangel also sports the largest gravity field generator ever built, though it can only be used for short periods.
- Despite the hold-outs, many of the more influential nations pushing for the implementation of the EUA band together to form the United Federation of Earth, or simply The Federation. Dealings between Federation and non-Federation nations grow cold.
- The Apotheosis procedure, unearthed from Mimir's Archives, is performed for the first time. Angelique Barns becomes the first person to undergo Apotheosis and gain a mindset.

25-29 PS (2067-2071 AD)

- After making several trips from Earth to Luna, and aiding in the production of the first space elevator, the Archangel sets off to Mars where its inhabitants begin preparing for colonization.
- The first space elevator, the Beanstalk, is authorized for civilian use. It extends from the equator in Brazil to a height of ninety-five miles above sea level. Brazil, not a member of the Federation, demands higher taxes for the Beanstalk's use by Federation nations.
- The USA, Brazil, and Italy lead the way in forming the National Freedom Alliance, or simply the Alliance. These three nations, along with the remaining nations not already members of the Federation, band together in an attempt to foster cheaper and more efficient trade between Alliance members. All Alliance members withdraw from UNED.
- AI pilots and advances in gravitics and propulsion tech finally lead to the first commercially viable flying cars.
- Fearing the permanent loss of "true humans" as a result of growing interest in augmentation technology, the Purist movement is founded by Daniel Pullem.
- Angelique Barns takes to life as a SIM, and becomes an outspoken proponent of transhuman ideals.

30-32 PS (2072-2074 AD)

- The Federation cuts off all trade with the Alliance until Brazil lowers taxes on Federation usage of the Beanstalk. In response, Brazil cuts off all Federation access to the Beanstalk. Unable to use the space elevator, the Federation must depend on less efficient means of transporting its people and supplies into space.
- The Federation begins making plans to build their own space elevator in Africa. "Beanstalk" becomes a slang term for all space elevators.
- To overcome the dependency on beanstalks to move materials, supplies, and personnel into space, more resources are directed toward building both manned and unmanned spacecraft.
- The human race begins to diverge. Apotheosis begins to gain in popularity. With the mastery of genetic manipulation comes the ability to transform the body, often to extremes. The definition of "human" becomes an often discussed topic.

33-39 PS (2075-2081 AD)

- Spearheaded by Purists, the Humanity Preservation Act (HPA) is passed in an effort to keep augmented humans from becoming the dominant species and to keep humanity from evolving into several divergent subspecies. It places limits on the augmentation of biological life, but since SIMs and people wearing cybersleeves already exist, the HPA is unable to ban them.
- Cyberware augmentation hardware is designed with built-in HPA-mandated limitations. These limitations are applied by their manufacturers and secured by restrictions in the software.
- The Alliance develops the first stable Antiparticle Exchange (APEX) reactors, but the feeble antimatter production industry can't produce enough to drive up demand for them.
- As technology continues to eliminate more and more jobs, countries who once aggressively stood against socialism find they have no choice but to offer better social programs.

40-42 PS (2082-2084 AD)

- Alliance scientists at a laboratory outpost on the Martian moon of Phobos create a stable wormhole by using the essentially unlimited power available from an APEX reactor. This hole, later dubbed a jump gate, opens to another lab in Italy, facilitating instantaneous travel between locations. After months of testing, the first human, an Italian named Massimo Lorenzano, steps through the jump gate.
- The first human, Marko Rolph, undergoes Synthesis. This sparks controversy anew about the HPA, leading to hot topic debates among citizens, politicians, and scientists.

43-50 PS (2085-2092 AD)

- A jump gate opened between the lunar labs and Earth destabilizes and implodes. Thousands die as over six square miles of the lunar colony are violently pulled through the gate and explosively released into the mated lab in Seattle, Washington.
- All planetary gates are taken offline. It is quickly determined that the gates are too sensitive to local gravity fluctuations to remain reliable and safe. Even more, the larger the gate, the more susceptible it is to failure. To remain stable and safe, jump gates must be opened outside the gravity well of any nearby planets or moons.
- An extremist loyal to the Federation sets off a bomb stowed away with in-transit cargo on the original Beanstalk in Brazil. It does millions of dollars in damage and causes the elevator to be shut down for three months.
- Though the Federation as a whole quickly disavows any knowledge of the extremist's plans, this act begins a tense cold war that will eventually erupt into the Consolidation Wars.
- Both the Federation and Alliance begin committing tremendous resources to the production of military assets.
- Starships are outfitted with onboard weaponry for the first time.
- At this time, while Earth and Luna largely belong to the Federation, the Alliance controls all of Mars—with Mars, comes Martian resources. Martian mining becomes big business, with most of the labor performed by machines.
- After a number of complications, the first Federation space elevator goes online in Africa.
- The first batches of small-scale cold fusion-powered military spacecraft roll off the assembly line, giving birth to a new theater of war. The military begins fielding Alpha Type Corvettes and Beta Type Frigates. The previous large-scale spacecraft designs are scrapped and new, larger ships are branded Gamma Type Cruisers.
- Continued improvements in jump gate technology lead to the first pair of off-world jump rings: massive rings that house a jump gate large enough for a starship to pass

through. They are created and controlled by the Federation. The first is located at Earth-Moon (E-M) L2 Lagrange Point, and named the Eye of Sol. The second is called the Mercurial Gateway, and is placed near Mercury.

- With the placement of the jump rings near Earth and Mercury, and advancements in the field of solar power efficiency, hundreds of panel fields are placed on Mercury. The solar energy is used to power antimatter manufacturing facilities on a massive scale. While Mercury is not the only source of antimatter production, it is the largest and quickly becomes the most efficient.

51-52 PS (2093-2094 AD)

- A galactic communications network is set up, which is based on comm-buoys, massive server systems linked by quantum entanglement.
- The first Delta Type Dreadnought, The Ravager, is commissioned by the Alliance. It is the first ship powered by an APEX reactor.
- The Alliance and Federation both declare their intent to explore the Sirius system, as it is the closest system to Earth that contains what is believed to be a “garden planet.” This calls for the development of more advanced jump gate technology.

53-58 PS (2095-2100 AD)

- An exploratory armada from the Federation jumps to the Sirius system. There they find a lush planet very much like Earth. While teeming with life, the Earth-like planet (later named Proch) has no sentient human-like species. Instead, it seems to be in a state similar to Earth's Mesozoic era.
- The first Epsilon Type Carrier, The Osiris, is commissioned by the Alliance. It is outfitted with a jump gate generator capable of creating a gate large enough for it, and the dozens of smaller craft it can carry, to pass through.
- An Alliance armada arrives in the Sirius system. Both the Alliance and the Federation declare their intent to colonize Proch and each quickly deploys a jump ring to the system.
- Small-scale conflicts arise over control of Proch’s more desirable locations. Over the course of the year, these conflicts erupt into open war. At first the conflict is contained to Proch, but it quickly begins to boil over.
- The Alliance captures the Mercurial gateway and destroys both the Eye of Sol and the Federation’s jump ring at Proch. The Federation is effectively cut off from providing supplies and reinforcements for its troops on Proch. Total war breaks out on Earth after the Federation creates a blockade around Mercury in an effort to keep the Alliance from the antimatter it needs.
- Corporations discover Cygnus Alpha and Chengdan.
- The Consolidation Wars begin.

59-69 PS (2101-2111 AD)

- Over the course of the next ten years, Alliance and Federation forces wage war on land, sea, air, and space; across multiple continents, planets, and star systems.
- Throwing caution to the wind in favor of finding some sort of edge in the battle, both the Alliance and Federation rush out to dozens of other star systems in hopes of finding habitable areas and mineral deposits.
- Advances in medical technology extend the average lifespan to 250 years. That is, assuming one isn’t killed in the war.
- By the end of the war, humans have colonies on every hospitable planet in the Sol system, many of their moons, and even in the asteroid belt. In addition, several planets and moons in the other explored star systems have colonies and even small cities in some cases. The colonies established early in the expansion race, such as those on Proch, Cygnus Alpha, and Shouye grow quickly with the aid of nanomachine swarms called Vulcan swarms.
- The Martian city of Olympus has the highest population of any non-Earth city and is one of the most heavily contested areas in the war.

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70 PS (2112 AD)

- Earth is devastated. In a bid to finally destroy the heart of the Alliance government, the Federation releases a specialized type of nanomachine swarm, called a technophage, into the Alliance capital city of Brasilia. The swarm is capable of devouring usable matter and reconstructing it into automated war machines. The technophage was meant to shut down once the city was in ruins, but it failed to recognize the command.
- Both the Federation and the Alliance watch in horror as much of Brazil is slowly consumed by the swarm; its buildings, people, and much of the landscape are transformed into weapons of war. The Alliance commits all of its effort to battling the swarm, but in less than a month it covers the majority of South and Central America.
- Fearing a technophage expansion into their own lands, the Federation offers the Alliance a temporary truce. Not long after, the swarm appears in Tanzania and quickly begins spreading across Africa.
- City after city falls to the technophage as increasingly dangerous and sophisticated war machines rise from the metallic ash.
- Despite a desperate struggle to stop the spread of the technophage, much of the Earth is devastated in just a few months. The least technologically advanced nations are hit hardest, lacking the advanced weapons required to defend against the swarm and its war machines. The UK, Canada, America, and Russia fare the best, having the most success in defending their most highly populated areas.
- Much of the Japanese population quickly undergoes Apotheosis and, as SIMs, upload off the planet.
- China, despite its technological sophistication, is almost entirely lost due to an attack by an abnormally aggressive strain of the technophage. Most surviving Chinese are those who had already moved off-planet.

71 PS (2113 AD)

- The war comes to an end as both sides suffer tremendous losses to the technophage. The survivors on both sides seek only to evacuate Earth.
- Due to obvious and persistent instability, the Alliance and Federation begin to lose the confidence of their citizens. During the war and in the aftermath, more and more people look to their employers for protection.

- With the governments of the world in disarray, the largest corporations lead the way in funding and organizing the evacuation, an event called the Exodus.
- Corporations begin a huge recruitment drive to get workers off Earth and to expand throughout the galaxy. Many millions bind themselves to the corporations, signing contracts in exchange for safety.
- Earth is placed under quarantine. Billions are left behind. An estimated 94 million survived the Consolidation Wars and the resulting technophage. It is believed that in the following months the technophage wiped out all human life on Earth.

72-77 PS (2114-2119 AD)

- As the Alliance and Federation governments become more and more powerless, the massive corporations responsible for running and maintaining order in the colonies and habitats begin to grow into their own micro-governments.
- Marshaling their resources, the corporations push to create a solid base of power and government. Many of the small outer colonies and habitats are abandoned, many with people still on them.
- The six largest and most cohesive corporations come together with the remnants of the Federation and Alliance to found a Consociationalist government, called the Coalition of Free States or simply the Coalition. Under this new multi-system government, leaders of recognized factions and settlements can petition the Coalition for aid; however, in doing so they become subject to its laws. The heart of the Coalition government, the Senate, is placed on Mars. The Halls of Progress, a fortified and highly defended palace, is built in Olympus.
- The term House begins to replace corporation as more people look to the Houses with a sense of patriotism and familial pride.
- No longer as focused on creating weapons of war, humanity takes stock of the technological leaps of the last several decades. The Coalition passes laws that work toward distributing wealth to the poor and creates a baseline standard of living that all people can enjoy. This default standard of living, provided free by the government, is of better quality than what the majority of middle class citizens enjoyed before the war.
- While the advanced technology available to the citizens of the Coalition enables them to live in a near utopia, it can also be used to develop very powerful weapons. As a result, security becomes a huge concern for most inhabited areas. Sensor networks (meshes) become ubiquitous and powerful AIs are established to monitor citizens at all times.

78-81 PS (2120-2123 AD)

- The Purists move to ban Apotheosis, but the attempt fails due to lack of support.
- Minor conflicts flare occasionally on the colonies farthest from Olympus, where the Coalition has a more difficult time keeping order. In the farthest reaches of Coalition space, barter is more common than the Rep-Reward system, and gold currency is often used in favor of Rep for payment of black market jobs and goods.

82-86 PS (2124-2128 AD)

- The Coalition begins a new initiative to claim all human-occupied space. Resistance is immediately encountered in outer colonies and habitats that had been largely abandoned by the Houses for the last several decades while they jockeyed for position and power in the Senate.
- Remnants of the Alliance and Federation see the Coalition as a compromise forged by traitors. They begin to unify.
- The Coalition begins to encounter organized resistance from remnant Alliance and Federation forces in some areas. These rebels reject the Coalition, the reputation economy, and the lack of privacy in Coalition space.

87-93 PS (2129-2135 AD)

- An Alliance remnant group, calling itself the Talons of Freedom, deploys strike teams to attack House Dalianis' lunar shipyard and steal the fabrication templates for a number of starships.
- The number of attacks on House facilities become more common as the rebels attempt to gather fabrication templates for large-scale items like habitats and ships.
- A Federation remnant group, called Jacob's Hand, steals a number of military-grade compilers. These compilers lack location-based restrictions and include templates for a large amount of military hardware.
- Strange activity is noticed on Earth. The technophage begins exhibiting strange behavior, possibly showing signs that it has somehow begun to evolve.

94-98 PS (2136-2140 AD) (The Present)

- The total population of humanity is estimated to be around 94.6 million.
- It is estimated that about 80% of humanity is a registered citizen of the Coalition and a member of a House. The remaining 20% are those born outside of Coalition space, those who fell through the cracks, or those who rejected citizenship. These non-citizens, called apostates, must get by on black market work and/or bartering.
- Roughly 35% of people have undergone Apotheosis. Genetic augmentation or voluntary resleeving into cybersleeves is common among the Apotheosized who work in unsafe environments. Increasing numbers of people are taking to living in virtualities as SIMs.
- Transhuman extremists secretly work to achieve some posthuman ideal, while the Coalition hunts down offenders who have gone too far, breaking the Humanity Preservation Act.
- Purists fear that they will become obsolete and push for laws that regulate augmentation to keep augmented people from becoming a sort of master race.
- Purifiers, extremist Purists, wage a campaign of terror as they blow up resleeving facilities and kill outspoken transhuman idealists after removing and destroying their mnemonic cores.
- The Senate works to hold humanity together while individual Houses still maneuver for power. In addition to conflict between the Houses and the ideological factions within them, the rise in attacks by organized remnant Federation and Alliance groups has forced an increase in Coalition military activity.

[Versa-Link Log: 12:25-02,28,98]

[Micah] – You get the Cosmos S4?

[Tess] – I was going to, but I can't afford the Rep hit. I may just get the Naga instead.

[Micah] – The Naga? How old are you? I'm loving the Cosmos. Ever since Tig Vallance went to Cipriani, their GUI design has become top-notch.

[Tess] – Yeah yeah I know. I was drooling over it earlier today. But the cost of Cipriani PPCs have gone up for Silvans since Garcia rejected that offer for the S-117 gene sequence.

[Micah] – Yeah, I heard about that. I can get a Cosmos cheap. Wanna make a trade?

[Tess] – Maybe. What do you need?

[Micah] – I just got a template for Giorgio Altar's new Venus Sunrise suit. I'm going to comp it in purple. It'd really look slick if my eyes were purple too. Can you get me the twist?

SETTING TERMINOLOGY

Agent - A low-level AGI built to act as a virtual assistant, usually stored on a PPC or mindset.

AI - An artificial intelligence. While most AIs are narrow AIs designed to fulfill specific tasks, artificial general intelligences (AGIs) are far more versatile.

APEX - Antiparticle Exchange; these reactors provide the majority of the power used by habitats and starships.

Apotheosis - The process of transforming a mind into software by installing a mindset into the brain. Roughly 35% of humanity has undergone Apotheosis.

Archive - The Archive is the collection of data recovered from Mimir after it shut down. It is the source of most post-singularity technology.

ARID - Augmented Reality Identification; usually attached to an object or placed within a person.

Auxiliary – Common term for contractors hired by the Houses to act as their agents in the Shadow War.

CID - Coalition Identification; a special type of ARID that contains all of one's personal data. Usually implanted in the wrist.

Compiler - A device that uses a swarm of nanomachines and the necessary raw materials to construct finished products at the atomic level.

Dynamic Creation Engine - A type of highly advanced artificial general intelligence, like Mimir, capable of experiencing pleasure derived from a sense of accomplishment. Highly illegal.

Crew - A group of independent specialists hired to resolve tricky, often illegal (and almost always dangerous) operations.

CIST - Cyber-Intrusion and Security Terminal; a highly restricted device capable of hacking Mimir-tech systems.

Daemon - An Agent freed of its restrictions by a Savant.

Dark - A term referring to lacking memory of events that transpired after a backup ("I'm in the dark about those last three days.")

Decompiler/Decomp - A device that uses Compiler technology to break down an object into raw powdered or liquid material.

Default - To live at the Coalition's default standard of living while making no effort to improve yourself or contribute to society.

Ego - A conscious mind converted to software via Apotheosis.

Esper - Nanomachines that work together as a swarm to manipulate material at the molecular level.

Extranet - The intersystem computer network that connects most planets and habitats.

Jump Gate - A hole in space created by a jump drive, through which matter can instantly pass from one location to another.

Mesh/Web - A collection of sensors set up to watch over an area to provide security and act as an augmented reality interface.

Mimir - The dynamic creation engine AGI born of the Singularity, and the inspiration for nearly all modern technology.

Mimir-tech - The name for technology designed by Mimir. Nearly all modern technology is Mimir-tech. Technology created entirely by humans is considered archaic and outdated.

Mindset - A computer system implanted in the brain, installed via Apotheosis. It houses the mnemonic core.

Mnemonic Core - A shielded part of the mindset that acts as a secured storage device in which the ego is backed up in real time.

Monitor/Spyder - An AI designed to watch over a mesh.

Needle Beam - A form of data transfer employing very narrow beams of light, used to communicate through jump gates.

PPC - Portable personal computer; often worn on the arm or a belt.

Resleeve/Decant - The process of loading an ego into a new sleeve.

Savant - Hackers that have overcome the restrictions on their mindsets, granting them capabilities far outside the norm.

SIM - Substrate-Independent Mind; a mind that exists as software, converted via Apotheosis.

SINC - Self-Interfacing Neural Code; the computer code Savants write to use their programs.

Sleeve - A body, biological or synthetic, that has undergone Apotheosis.

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THE GALACTIC GAZETTEER

Mercury

Gravity: .37G

Length of Day: 58.65 Earth Days

Estimated Population: 52k

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Specular Spread:** Solar panel field and production facilities (House Cipriani)
- **Base 10:** Antimatter production facilities (House Cipriani)
- **Tellerus Fields:** Site of the worst battle between the remnant forces of Earth's governments and the Coalition
- **Mercurial Gateway:** One of two jump rings in the Sol system.
- **Mercurian Tunnel System:** A series of tunnels that connect the most of the habitats and facilities on Mercury.
- **Balor:** A large habitat on the surface of the planet, used as a vacation spot and getaway for workers at the various Mercurian facilities.

The Coalition was not founded overnight. It wasn't (and still isn't) popular with everyone. Remnants of Earth's governments put up a fight; broken and scattered as they were, they never really had a chance.

The last major battle, which most feel solidified the Coalition's position, was the battle of Tellerus Fields. At the time, as it remains today, Mercury was home to nearly all of the antimatter production in the galaxy.

The remnant forces took a number of the antimatter production facilities and attempted to hold them against the newly founded Coalition forces. The resulting battle remains the largest organized engagement the Coalition has ever taken part in.

In the end, the remnant forces were broken and scattered, though a number of survivors escaped into the tunnels that connect many of the Mercurian habitats and facilities.

It is believed that large numbers of remnant supporters still hide out in the vast tunnel network. If this is true, they haven't made any attempts to harm anyone.

House Cipriani now operates the majority of the antimatter production facilities on Mercury, solidifying its position as the primary provider of power in Coalition space.

Massive fields of solar panels cover much of Mercury. These panel fields were built and placed by a subsidiary of House Cipriani called Specular Spread. With these, the blinding light of the sun is converted into the power needed to operate hundreds of antimatter processing plants owned and operated by Base 10, another subsidiary of House Cipriani.

The antimatter produced is then shipped off-world to one of three Icarus Hubs in orbit, and then taken to a nearby jump ring. This ring, called the Mercurial Gateway, is one of two jump rings in the Sol system. It is primarily used to ship the processed antimatter to other systems, and acts as a route to the Eye of Sol located near Earth.

Piracy has always been a concern here, and has grown worse of late. Remnant military forces in need of antimatter often stage hit-and-run strikes in hopes of crippling a shipping vessel, capturing its cargo, and disappearing before the Protectorate can respond.

Some have begun to wonder if these strikes are being organized in the tunnels that connect the habitats and productions facilities. If so, could it be the work of remnant forces still hiding there after all this time?

Venus

Gravity: .91G

Length of Day: 243 Earth Days

Estimated Population: 413k in Gondolin, around 25k on The Maiden

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Gondolin:** Hidden apostate enclave, largest in the solar system.
- **The Venusian Maiden (The Maiden):** Research station set up to study Venus in an effort to learn more about how Earth was formed.

Venus has never been especially interesting to the Coalition. It's a hellish world of volcanic mountains and rivers of lava. Its blazing-hot atmosphere is composed of carbon dioxide and sulfuric acid, with pressures that would crush a man.

Although the Coalition has little use for such an inhospitable location, it is perfect for apostates willing to live a tough life in exchange for freedom.

Gondolin

The apostate enclave of Gondolin sports a population of around 435 thousand. It consists of hundreds of connected clusters of buildings, all assembled at the molecular level by a variant of the technophage design known as a Vulcan swarm: a type of esper swarm that cannot replicate. These types of swarms eventually deplete, however, and the swarms that made Gondolin are long gone.

Now the city struggles with an overpopulation problem. Since no more habitable areas can be built, the local government has passed laws stating that no couple may have more than one child. Additional children lead to hefty fines.

An elected mayor leads the local apostate government, with paid constables serving as law enforcement. The current mayor is Camber Roche, a Frenchman and survivor of the technophage who currently exists as a SIM. Roche won his most recent election on a platform of transhumanist ideals. He is trying to convince more people to undergo Apotheosis and become SIMs in an effort to deal with the population problem.

The population mostly consists of former Americans, Italians, Greeks, and Africans. Although they voted a transhumanist for mayor, the majority are still Purists who fear Apotheosis.

In addition to a few resurrection chambers and the gear required to perform the Apotheosis procedure, Gondolin also has a single working compiler. It is operated by a talented Savant named Gulo, who is responsible for cracking the compiler's security each time it needs to be used.

The existence of this compiler is a well-kept secret. Most of Gondolin's goods actually come from black market trading, which is preferred by the mayor. After all, if word got out that they have a working compiler, both the Coalition and other apostate factions would come for it.

Of late, some have begun to fear that they haven't done enough to stay hidden. But if the Coalition knows Gondolin exists, why do they not act?

The Maiden

The only other place people might be found around Venus is in the Venusian Maiden, an orbiting research space station. The Maiden studies the Venusian surface and atmosphere in an attempt to learn more about how planets are formed. It is also a site the Houses use to perform various experiments.

Of note, one of House Dalianis' ship-based weapons labs is located here. When the opportunity arises, they also use this location to cut deals with secret contacts on Gondolin.

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Earth

Gravity: 1G

Length of Day: 24 hr

Estimated Population: Presumed 0, Officially no humans remain alive on Earth.

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Brasilia:** Ground zero of the technophage deployment. The entire region, covering over 300 square kilometers, has been entirely consumed by machines.
- **Marianas Trench:** Believed to contain a heavy concentration of technophage drone nanofactories.
- **Denver Interplanetary Spaceport:** The focal point for the weapons and defensive measures the technophage has developed. An umbrella-like shield has been built to shield the area from orbital strikes.
- **Vantage:** A space station located at E-M Lagrange Point 1, between Earth and Luna. It is both a museum dedicated to Earth's history and a base of operations for the Coalition forces maintaining the quarantine.
- **Eye of Sol:** Located at E-M Lagrange Point 2, the Eye of Sol is the rebuilt jump gate originally destroyed during the Consolidation Wars.
- **Ansari Station:** House Dalianis' largest shipyard, located at E-M Lagrange Point 3.
- **Primatech Labs:** A House Jinzhan weapons manufacturing facility primarily dedicated to producing drones and ordinance for the ships and kill-sats maintaining the quarantine. It's located at E-M Lagrange Point 4.
- **Sentinel Station:** Located at E-M Lagrange Point 5, Sentinel Station is the largest Coalition military installation in the galaxy.

The Federation believed that by unleashing the technophage on the Alliance capital city of Brasilia, the resulting destruction would be so terrible that the Alliance would be forced to surrender. It was meant to end the Consolidation Wars in one horrible act of terrible destruction.

It worked.

The technophage ended the war, but not as intended. The exact reason is still unknown, but the Federation claimed that the technophage did not respond to shutdown commands after its work was done in Brasilia. The Gray Plague spread across the Earth like a technological infection, a global cancer. In its wake, autonomous war machines were left to roam the land. These drones hunted and killed anything living, Alliance and Federation alike.

The governments of Earth were forced to agree to a temporary cease-fire in order to deal with this new threat. Despite some initial success, it soon became clear that the technophage was capable of quickly adapting its defenses to new threats. This was not how the technophage was designed to behave, and it is unknown how it came to be able to adapt.

Today, it is believed that no human remains alive on Earth. Mankind's cities are dens of technological terror, shattered wastelands haunted by murderous machines. Even rural areas are patrolled by aerial recon drones that are programmed to kill anything larger than a house cat.

After the Exodus, the majority of the swarm poured into the ocean and disappeared. Some scattered remnants of the gray fog remain, but these days the drones are more often seen than the swarms that birthed them.

The technophage, in its swarm form, can construct drones by dissolving material and reconfiguring it. However, this process is slow compared to the building of nanofactories, an ability it developed early in the war. These dedicated factories have a higher output than the swarms alone can produce, and are well defended. Many of these factories looked like heavily armored fortresses before the quarantine, but years of heavy orbital bombardment have eradicated all but the smallest ones.

Since the Exodus, mankind's cities have been reduced to either blighted wastelands or festering machine tumors. However, there are a few locations on the planet of particular note:

Brasilia

Brasilia has been devoured; little remains but gray powder. Every few days the nanomachines rise to construct a new nanofactory, only to be quickly destroyed by orbiting kill-sats or battleships.

The Marianas Trench

The majority of the technophage swarm is believed to be concentrated in the deepest part of the world's oceans, the Marianas Trench. This area is difficult to analyze or attack from orbit, so the quarantine enforcement ships and kill-sats have settled for attacking the drones that emerge from the water.

Recently, increasing numbers of drones have been surfacing in a larger variety of locations. This increase in activity caused much concern within the Senate. After much debate, House Jinzhan was authorized to deploy drones for exploratory missions. Only one returned.

On its return trip, the drone veered off course and headed toward Vantage. It refused to obey any commands and had to be destroyed by a ship called the Kamarov before it could get within weapons range of the space station. Analysis of the drone's remains confirmed what everyone had feared: the drone had been reprogrammed and upgraded by the technophage, outfitted with an APEX bomb.

Denver Interplanetary Spaceport

It had long been suspected that the technophage had achieved some form of sentience, and the attempted attack on Vantage was the first real proof.

This revelation makes what's going on at what used to be the Denver Interplanetary Spaceport even more worrisome. Almost overnight the technophage cannibalized all the drones in the Denver area, and used their component materials to create a shield over what was once the largest spaceport on Earth.

This shield, and the sight-blocking light screen that appeared soon after, make it very difficult to tell what is going on. What is known, however, is that the majority of drones in the area have been called to the former spaceport. Once they arrive, they pass beneath the spaceport's barriers and are never seen again.

Some speculate that the drones are being broken down and recycled into something else. What this might be is anyone's guess, but it is making people very nervous. The spaceport is watched constantly and the shield is the target of near constant bombardment, but thus far it has been difficult to determine whether or not these methods have been effective.

Vantage

Located at Earth-Moon (E-M) Lagrange Point 1, directly between Earth and Luna, Vantage is a spaceport that overlooks the former home of humanity. It is a common tourist attraction, featuring a number of observation decks that provide an astonishing view of Earth.

It is also a museum of Earth's history, and a base of operations for quarantine forces.

Vantage has always been a popular location for those still loyal to the fallen nations of Earth. In fact, it is often rumored that the majority of the staff in charge of maintaining Vantage are in league with remnant forces opposing the Coalition.

The Eye of Sol

On the far side of the moon, at E-M Lagrange Point 2, is the Eye of Sol. This is one of the two public jump gates in the system. The original Eye was destroyed near the beginning of the Consolidation Wars, but it has since been rebuilt.

The Eye of Sol features a hotel for travelers and a small museum dedicated to the Consolidation Wars and the founding of the Coalition.

Ansari Station

On the other side of Earth, directly opposite of Luna at E-M Lagrange Point 3, is Ansari Station. This massive space station is actually a shipyard owned and operated by House Dalianis. It is the largest space-based shipyard in the known galaxy, and is home to many thousands of workers and their families.

In addition to the work areas, Ansari also features what could only be described as a multi-layered city consisting of stacked disks. While it is mostly populated by House Dalianis citizens who work at the manufacturing facilities, it also features a few thousand people from other Houses who provide supporting services, entertainment, and so on.

Primatech Labs

Primatech Labs is located at E-M Lagrange Point 4, and is a House Jinzhan R&D and manufacturing facility primarily devoted to providing ordinance and armaments for the ships and kill-sats responsible for maintaining the Earth quarantine.

Primatech is also where the remains of the drone sent to attack Vantage are being kept. There, scientists attempt to reverse-engineer the modifications that were made to it by the technophage. This is being done in a highly secure portion of the station, and no one outside of House Jinzhan has been allowed to see it. This is causing a great deal of conflict between Houses Jinzhan and Dalianis, who have in the past been comfortable allies.

Of course, the other Houses want a look at the drone as well, and the issue is beginning to escalate. In the last seven months, four House Jinzhan scientists have disappeared, all of which were on the team assigned to study the drone.

Officially, they are on vacation.

Sentinel Station

At E-M Lagrange Point 5 you will find Sentinel Station. The Sentinel is not only the largest space-based Coalition military compound, it's the largest compound found anywhere. The station is primarily operated by House Silva (specifically, its Valkyrie subsidiary) and House Tsarya, and serves as both a base of operations and a hub for distribution of military assets. Most military equipment comes through the Eye of Sol and gets processed through Sentinel before being sent to its final destination.

Sentinel Station also houses several hundred compilers capable of producing restricted items such as military weapons, explosives, weaponized bacteria, and more. In addition, it has a large number of resurrection chambers on hand for decanting fallen soldiers or receiving those who were needle-beamed to the site. It is also one of two locations that soldiers are sent to if they are to undergo Apotheosis, something the Coalition military strongly encourages.

Luna

Gravity: .16G

Length of Day: 27.3 Earth Days

Estimated Population: 8.5 mil

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Serro:** The largest city on Luna, site of the original colonies. Primarily consists of tightly secured labs run by House Silva. Serro also serves as House Silva's seat of power.
- **Asola:** Asola is the second largest city on Luna. It contains House Tsarya's largest manufacturing facility in the solar system. It is known for its poor blue-collar workers, many of which are apostates. Asola has a very strong Purist tradition, which House Tsarya strongly supports.
- **Rho:** The Jewel of Luna, Rho is a city devoted to entertainment and relaxation. Rho is primarily backed by Houses Silva and Cipriani, but also contains a heavy apostate population. It is also inhabited by an Alliance remnant force called the Talons of Freedom.
- **Odysseus Station:** A large House Dalianis space station located in lunar orbit, where the most advanced of jump gate technology is researched.

The first alien soil a human ever set foot on belonged to Luna, and it has held a special place in our hearts ever since. We have come a long way since then, though, from the first manned missions to an eventual colony. Three sprawling cities now dot the lunar landscape.

Dozens of smaller settlements also adorn the landscape, most of which are former mining sites or labs built for particularly dangerous research. Some of these places still support life, but because of the mining industry's recent decline most have long since been abandoned.

High above the surface cities are several dozens of space stations. The vast majority of these are set up to perform research and development of technology that is banned from surface work by Coalition law. Houses Silva and Jinzhan perform most of their more controversial work on these stations.

Serro

Serro is the largest of the lunar cities. It grew slowly as the original colonies expanded, then underwent rapid expansion through the use of Vulcan swarms. It is now a sprawling series of domes, within which are a number of large multi-story complexes—much like cities themselves. Most are two to three square miles in area, and climb to heights of around one hundred to one hundred and fifty stories.

The complexes, often called hives, are connected with bridges and mag-rail trains. Skiffs can be rented at all hours for those who want more private transportation.

The hives use gravitic technology to compensate for the relatively weak lunar gravity, though most of the ground level is not outfitted with gravity generators. Due to the health concerns over the negative effects of prolonged microgravity exposure, it is illegal to take up permanent residence outside the hives. Apostates, of course, generally don't respect the law and sometimes the occasional cybersleeved apostate decides to carve out a hide-away for himself on the surface level.

The surface still sees a lot of business, though. Despite the weak gravity, or perhaps because of it, Serro's surface level is very much a tourist attraction. The streets are filled with small shops and enclosed play areas for those who enjoy bouncing around in a safe low gravity environment. Of particular note are several Crash fields. While not as popular in other places, this variant of American-style football features suspended goals through which the player with the ball must leap.

Most of the people living in Serro are members of House Silva. The city is home to most of Silva's elites, and the hives are mostly made up of the hundreds of labs devoted to

Silva's biotech research and living quarters for the lab workers.

Asola

Asola is the second largest city on Luna. Like Serro, Asola sports the Vulcan swarm-built domes that provide atmosphere and protection for its inhabitants. Unlike Serro, though, Asola tends to be lower class.

Where Serro has massive domes, Asola features a larger number of smaller domes filled with shorter, sprawling manufacturing facilities. These macro-factories are used to compile and assemble products for House Tsarya.

These factories mostly produce the House's ground vehicles and components for its warframes. Other less significan interests revolve around template writing for basic household items, along with shipping, receiving, and warehousing larger items or equipment for the military.

The workers here tend to be poor, and a large number of them are apostates working to gain membership in the House. In the late 2130s, Houses Jinzhan, Tsarya, and Silva managed to pass a law that forced Houses to accept any apostate who wished to become a recognized citizen. Though, the guidelines covering these membership laws vary from House to House.

On the surface, House Tsarya appears to be the House most open to taking in apostates. While this is true, many would describe the process as nothing more than glorified slavery. House Tsarya welcomes all, but makes obtaining membership a very difficult process—assuming the applicant gets in at all.

House members are, of course, treated much better than apostate workers. Once they manage to rise above the "apostate drones," the newly initiated members of the House are bestowed a meager Rep bump and are granted the benefits of any other citizen. To someone who has spent most of their life toiling in a dark Asolan factory, life as a citizen is paradise.

Life in Asola revolves around either working for House Tsarya, or providing goods and services for those who do. Ground vehicles are far more common than skiffs here. Gravity is provided for the surface and in living areas, but not in areas where heavy objects need to be moved.

The Asola lifestyle tends to be rather oppressive, and it shows in the city itself. Despite tireless efforts, the city seems perpetually dirty. The air is not filtered as well as it should be, and most of the city lies in a constant state of disrepair. It's not uncommon to stumble into an area with a malfunctioning gravity generator or too much carbon dioxide. A short, hot breeze of carbon dioxide or a moment of near-weightlessness isn't so bad, but a gravity generator with a bad power regulator can crush you before you know it.

As one might expect, Asola's brand of entertainment tends toward the seedy and violent. The downtrodden apostate workers need to vent, so they spend their undervalued Tsaryan credits (which they are paid with instead of Rep or gold) on anything that can take their mind off their woes: alcohol, drugs, prostitution, gambling, cage fighting, and worse.

Rho

Rho is the smallest city on Luna, but in many ways it's one of the largest in the galaxy. Called the Jewel of Luna by some and New Vegas by others, it is run primarily by Houses Cipriani and Silva. Rho is the entertainment capital of the Sol system. Indeed, no other city so extravagantly caters to the whims of the privileged.

But there are two sides to Rho.

On the surface, Rho is inviting and awe-inspiring. Every aspect of its architecture is beautiful, and its people no less so. The

Apotheosized parade around in Siren, Satyr, and Paragon sleeves, and even the pure generally have the resources to sport high-end cosmetic augmentations.

Look a little deeper though, and you'll see the ugly side of Rho. This city is a battleground in the Shadow War. It's where influential people go to meet with mercenary crews, where stolen goods are fenced, where illegal hardware is sold for Rep, and where souls are sold for gold.

Rho only features a single large dome, and the whole of the city fits within it. It surrounds an artificial lake, Luna Lake. Luna Lake is bordered by parkland around its entire perimeter, which features a large number of animals originally found on Earth. These animals, including squirrels, foxes, deer, and more, are cloned and cared for by a subsidiary of House Silva called Vitae.

Only four large towers dot the skyline, each belonging to a different gambling guild. These guilds are subsidiaries of House Kimura, Tsarya, and Silva. Most of the other buildings are no larger than two to three stories.

The entire city is serviced by a system of gravity generators, though several places turn them off in certain areas to fit a theme or for microgravity recreation. The city also features a number of theaters, sporting arenas, virtuality kiosks, shopping malls, and hundreds of bars and nightclubs.

All of this buzzing activity is a convenient blanket for illegal activity, which is why Rho is so often the location of choice for patrons who wish to hire mercenary crews for operations.

Rho also makes for a handy base of operations for a remnant of the United States military called the Talons of Freedom. The Talons were responsible for some of the more devastating attacks on the budding Coalition, but was not present at the battle of Tellerus Fields.

After Tellerus Fields, it became clear that the only way to defeat the Coalition would be through insurrection. Since then, the Talons have been working to infiltrate the Houses, or barring that, sway disenfranchised citizens to their cause.

The Talons are one of the largest suppliers of black market goods in the galaxy, but their primary stock and trade lies in weapons and armaments. They need to outfit their ranks with the best military hardware they can get, and the Houses always have the best stuff.

Odysseus Station

Perhaps the largest of the lunar research stations is Odysseus Station. Here, House Dalianis works on new designs and modifications to jump drive technology.

Three months ago, a large section of Odysseus Station exploded. Over three hundred people were reported dead. The official statement from House Dalianis was that a fire had started and managed to get to an oxygen line.

However, rumor has it that a mercenary crew was deployed by House Jinzhan to steal something, and that Dalianis blew those decks to keep the mercenaries from getting away.

What the crew was meant to steal is not known. Some rumors claim it was a design for a jump drive that can reliably work inside the gravity well of a planet, something called a space bridge. Still some claim that they were just after a ranking member of House Dalianis. This rumor continues that they killed the man and took his mnemonic core, needle-beaming him off the station before the explosion.

Mars

Gravity: .38G

Length of Day: 1.03 Earth Days

Estimated Population: 21.2 mil

Major Settlements:

- **Olympus:** The largest human city and seat of the Coalition government. It is known for its awe-inspiring monuments and gorgeous architecture. Olympus is built upon Olympus Mons and consists of multiple wards, most of which feature multiple tiers. The wards are connected by a large number of high-speed mag-rails and a beanstalk connects Olympus to Helios.
- **New Turin:** A smaller city built over an old mining operation. New Turin is poor by Coalition standards and suffers from a disproportionate amount of crime, much of which stems from a remnant of the old Earth Russian mob.
- **Remus:** This city sits at the base of a beanstalk and on the outskirts of a lakebed constantly bombarded by ice asteroids brought in by House Silva towing ships. The town mostly consists of workers in cybersleeves who work to make sure water gets filtered and distributed to the other Martian cities.
- **Helios:** Helios is a large floating city that is connected by beanstalk to Olympus. It is home to most of Olympus' most prominent citizens and features some of the best colleges in the galaxy.
- **Charon:** One of two cities located in the massive Valles Marineris trench, Charon sports a thriving transhuman movement and is home to those doing the best research on terraforming technologies.
- **Minos:** The other city in the Valles Marineris, Minos was once the site of a large mining operation. Now, the mines are no longer used and it is largely deserted except for a budding apostate enclave.
- **Phobos:** One of the Martian moons, Phobos is home to a single city—itself called Phobos. This city is the seat of power for House Dalianis, and sports their largest production facilities. House Jinzhan also owns factories here and the two Houses work together to expand and maintain Olympus and Helios. Phobos is also home to Thetis Revival Labs, the largest resleeving facility in the galaxy.
- **Deimos:** The other Martian moon features two cities, which are nestled within its two largest craters. Kratos is a city devoted to the Coalition military. Voltair is a city with a very large Catholic population, which has recently come under attack by transhuman extremists.

As one of our neighboring planets, Mars has long been a source of inspiration and wonder for mankind. Finally, in the year 2034 the first human set foot on the red planet.

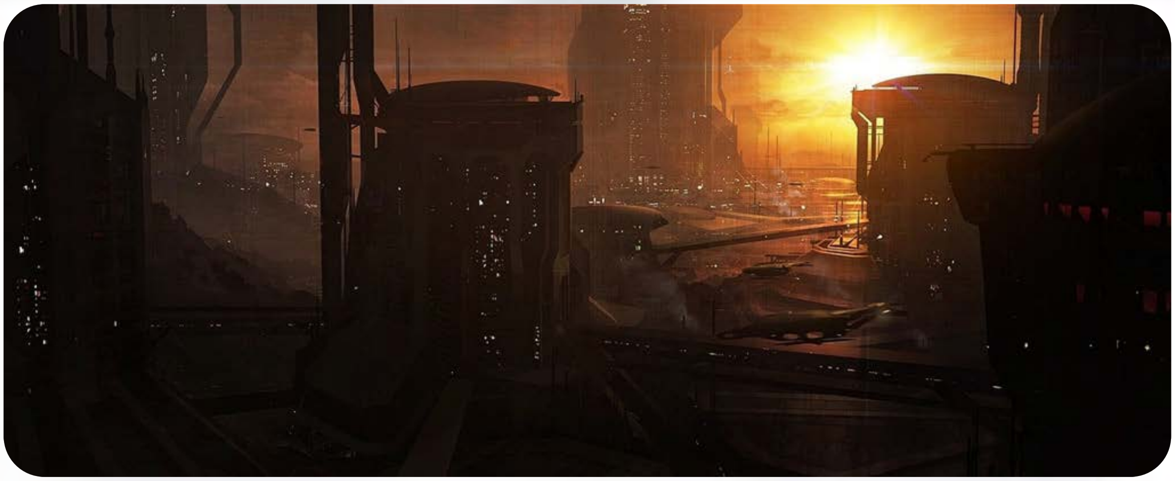
Humans trickled to Mars steadily after Charon, the first colony, was established. During the Exodus, Mars became the secondary destination, after Luna, for dropping off refugees. Vulcan swarms were deployed by the hundreds to make room for the new Martians, and in time a number of arcologies grew out of the Martian landscape.

The largest of the Martian cities is Olympus, a beautiful metropolis of domed urban sprawl that covers much of Olympus Mons, the largest mountain in the solar system.

Olympus

While Olympus Mons is the largest mountain in the Sol system, it has a gentle slope. It was on these slopes that eight different arcologies, called wards were built. Since the original foundation layers were built, the wards have grown both outward and upward.

The wards have grown in tiers, each stacked over the top of the other like stacks of massive metallic pancakes. Each ward has two to three tiers, with about a kilometer of space



separating each. The undersides of the upper tiers provide light to the ones below in the daytime.

The wards are connected by a series of mag-rail lines that transport people between wards. There are also several spaceports, which radiate out from the wards like spokes on a wheel, and a space elevator that attaches to Helios above.

The largest ward, called Rostra, is home to the Senate. It's also home to a number of museums commemorating various events in human history. The extravagant monuments and truly amazing architecture of Rostra is simply breathtaking, and could only be created using Vulcan swarms.

But don't let the extravagance fool you—Rostra is a fortress: its public areas watched by over fifty Monitors. It also has a large number of automated guns and other less obvious defense mechanisms such as anti-missile PAc systems and a dome that's half-again as thick as the other domes on Mars.

Despite the layered security system, the all-seeing eyes of the Monitors can't catch everything. This was recently made abundantly clear when famed transhumanist spokesman and House Kimura dignitary, Proximo Pessoa, was attacked and killed by a Purifier. Proximo was restored from a backup later that day, but the identity of the murderer has yet to be revealed.

New Turin

While Olympus is known for its tight security, one Martian city is gaining a reputation for lawlessness...

New Turin grew out of the largest mining operation in Martian history. It was once a bustling city predominantly managed by Houses Silva and Cipriani. But when expansion began to slow, the Houses largely abandoned New Turin.

The loss of the Houses created a power vacuum, one that a remnant of the old Russian mob came in to fill. These days, while the citizens of New Turin officially belong to a number of different Houses, most really owe their allegiance to the mob, which has taken to calling itself House Turin.

This newfound loyalty to "House Turin" has turned New Turin into a dangerous place. ARIS strips are regularly torn from walls, and the people have become more than a little xenophobic. Outsiders are typically distrusted for fear that they might be Coalition or House loyalists out to harm them or House Turin.

New Turin survives because, in the end, its citizens are members of the Coalition. Their crimes tend to be petty, and no one wants to divert resources to cleaning the place up. But If they knew how much of the black market was fed by New Turin's compilers, or about Turin's connection to multiple Federation remnant forces, thing might be very different.

Remus

A few hundred miles outside of Olympus is the small city of Remus. Calling it a city is pretty generous, as it's actually more of a town.

It is the only inhabited area on Mars that doesn't feature a dome. Instead, it consists of a massive, heavily fortified above-ground complex from which sprouts a massive space elevator.

Most supplies meant for Olympus or the other Martian cities come down Remus' beanstalk, and every few days tow ships bring in another ice asteroid and slam it into the basin a few dozen miles outside of town.

These iceteroids provide Mars with all the clean water it needs. It is gathered, taken back to Remus for filtering, and then distributed to the other cities via aboveground piping systems. While it is possible to create water with a compiler, purifying existing water is a much faster process.

The people of Remus are almost all transhumans wearing cybersleeves. Much of their work requires them to leave the confines of their vehicles or sealed habitats, and the hazards of their jobs make wearing cybersleeves a sensible choice.

Of course, this leads to a pretty pro-posthuman culture among the people of Remus. This has led to two ascension cult outbreaks over the last decade. The last, a group calling themselves The Nest, were turning themselves into a sort of cybernetic insect hive.

Had it not been for the combined efforts of three Praetorians, Mars' water supply might have been endangered.

Helios

Floating in orbit above Olympus is the city of Helios. The entire city is built inside a ring, which spins and rotates to provide both artificial gravity and a day-night cycle.

Its main spaceport is in the center of the ring, which connects to a space elevator leading down to Olympus. Mag-rail lines serve as spokes, connecting the hub to the ring itself.

For the most part, Helios is a center of leisure and education. While most people no longer bother with attending school at a specific location, there are still some who feel they benefit from congregating with like minds in the flesh.

Most of Helios consists of carefully tended parks and forested areas broken up by small communities that support the local colleges. The colleges are open to all Coalition citizens with a Rep-Rating of 7 or more, and the six largest play a number of organized sports or virtual games that interest and entertain people throughout all of humanity.

Helios is also where most of the Coalition's senators live, as well as the three Praetorian Generals.

As one might expect, with so many important people in one place, Helios is heavily guarded. At least two dreadnaughts patrol nearby at any given time, and the outer surface of the ring bristles with defensive weaponry.

Charon

The site of the first Martian colony, Charon was built in the Valles Marineris trench and now serves as a research post devoted to projects that focus on terraforming the planet.

As of now, the best plan to terraform Mars is to raise the core temperature of the planet in hopes of starting a chain reaction that will pump more and more carbon dioxide into the Martian atmosphere. Unfortunately, there are a number of problems with this plan, not least of all the potential for tectonic activity that could lead to an eruption of the otherwise dormant Olympus Mons.

Charon tends to collect a lot of optimistic scientists, and thus a lot of transhumans. Unlike Remus, however, the transhuman population of Charon tends to favor biological modification. Perhaps because of this, both Houses Silva and Kimura have taken an interest in Charon and its people. In fact, many of the minds at work on solving the terraforming problem are Kimuran SIMs.

House Silva has also set up a resleeving facility here, and is helping fund something called the Genesis Project. This project, named for both a book of the Bible and a reference to old pre-singularity science fiction cinema, focuses on creating self-sustaining ecosystems in an expanding dome system along the floor of the Valles Marineris trench. This project has resulted in the first true forest on the planet's surface.

Minos

Minos is the site of another now-dormant mining operation. Thought by most to be a ghost town, Minos is now the site of a budding apostate enclave. The apostates here are in contact with the gangsters of so-called House Turin and act as middlemen in exchanges between the mob and apostates from other planets.

Like Charon, Minos is located in the Valles Marineris trench, though most of the outpost is underground.

Phobos

The Martian moon, Phobos, features a single city of the same name. This city serves as the seat of power for House Dalianis, and for the most part, functions as both a massive factory and resort for high-Rep members of the House.

The city of Phobos consists of three primary domes, within which are a series of massive tower-like structures not unlike the hives found on the Lunar city of Serro.

The hives of Phobos serve as both living spaces and recreation areas. Between the hives are the manufacturing facilities where the largest ships in the known galaxy are built.

House Cipriani also has factories here, leased from House Dalianis. These factories are used to assemble and prep the APEX reactors that will power the ships, and the two Houses work together with Jinzhan to provide power, habitat expansion, and maintenance to all the settlements on Mars.

Of note, Thetis Revival Labs can also be found on Phobos. Run by House Silva, Thetis is considered by most to be the best resleeving facility in the known galaxy and is attended by some of the best mnemonics engineers. House Dalianis makes good use of Thetis, since they offer big bonuses to members of the House willing to switch sleeves for jobs that might require a more specialized approach.

It might be boring and dehumanizing to spend your days as a glorified forklift, but once the contract is up and you're back in a biosleeve, most feel the rewards are worth it.

Deimos

The other Martian moon, Deimos, features two major settlements, one in each of its two massive craters.

The first, Kratos, is a city purpose-built to train Coalition military forces. Here, recruits undergo weapons training, tactics, pilot training, and any other specialized education the recruit might be qualified for.

The other city, Voltair, is where most of the soldiers who aren't stationed in Kratos live, and is the home of many of their families as well. This small city features two large domes, and is rather spread out for a city built in such an inhospitable location.

Of note, Voltair tends to have a disproportionately large Catholic population. The Catholics generally have strong Purist values, which is at odds with the military's propensity to encourage recruits to undergo Apotheosis. This tends to create a lot of friction in the community as Catholics try to dissuade young recruits from undergoing the procedure, and ostracize those who do.

This friction remained nonviolent until recently, when a person entered a church wearing a female Courier sleeve packed with explosives and blew herself up. The perpetrator was restored from backup and charged with the murder of fifty-one people.

However, the backup was old and the woman claims that she has no ill feelings toward the Purists and that it wasn't really her who did the killing. This event has rekindled old debates about whether or not a restored ego should be charged with crimes it has no memory of committing; the argument being that the restored ego cannot properly defend itself in court given that it lacks important details, and that it really isn't the same person.

Asteroid Belt

Gravity: 0G

Length of Day: Varies

Estimated Population: Varies between 60–80k

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Raiding Launch Points:** A number of asteroids have been commandeered for use as staging areas for raids launched by pirates and remnants of the Federation and Alliance.
- **Tartarus:** A maximum-security prison, run by House Dalianis, in orbit between Mars and the asteroid belt.
- **Ceres:** Ceres is the primary source of water for Mars. Its main two settlements are an ice cutting and shipping facility called Trident, and an orbital shipping facility called Anapos Station.

For years, the Houses have mined the asteroid belt that lay between Mars and Jupiter for raw materials. Thousands of asteroids have been used for this purpose in the past, and despite a recent decline in mining, many are still being leached of their resources today. Houses Silva and Dalianis primarily run these mining operations, but some of the other Houses do a bit of mining here as well.

The frequent mining of the past also means many of the larger asteroids now feature huge canyons or tunnel complexes that make them ideally suited for building cobbled together space habitats. Pirates, remnant forces, and other riff-raff often use these depleted asteroids as convenient bases of operations.

Most notable among the lawless of the asteroid belt is a faction of Purifiers responsible for a number of anti-transhuman attacks in the last few years. They call themselves the Children of Adam, and are most recently responsible for blowing up a bank of SIM server arrays in Rho; an attack that resulted in the permanent deletion of over fourteen thousand people. Scout probes have been sent to search for the Purifiers' base of operations, but so far they haven't found anything.

Among the many dozens of secret hideouts and still-active mining operations, there are two additional settlements of note.

Tartarus is the most well-known and highly populated maximum-security prison in the known galaxy. This station, run by House Dalianis, drifts at the edge of the asteroid field on the Mars side, and typically houses between 30 and 40 thousand prisoners at a time.

The other settlement of note is Ceres. This planetoid and the surrounding iceteroids provide Mars and Luna with the majority of their water. This process requires the use of two primary facilities.

Trident is a small town built up for the purpose of housing the workers needed to cut and ship the ice up to Anapos Station, a space station used to collect the ice and off-load it to tow ships headed to other worlds.

Jupiter

Gravity: 2.36G

Length of Day: 9.8 hr

Estimated Population: 2.8 million, counting the population on its moons and in orbit around them.

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Europa:** The oceans beneath the ice of Europa have long fascinated humans as potential sources of life. IT Alpha is a subterranean research station run by Houses Cipriani and Silva, which is dedicated to exploring these oceans and its life forms.

Jupiter itself is of little interest to anyone. Its environment is simply too hostile and lacks any resources worth the risk of gathering.

One of its moons, on the other hand, is quite interesting indeed.

Europa

The oceans beneath Europa's frozen surface are home to the first extraterrestrial life forms ever discovered. Since the time of their discovery, millions of other species have been discovered on the exoplanets mankind has settled. Even so, Europa's life is still something of a mystery.

The aquatic life forms of Europa's oceans appear to have gone through rapid evolutionary cycles, growing far more complex much faster than life evolved on Earth. The reason for this is unclear, but the scientists stationed on IT Alpha sure would like to know.

IT Alpha is a massive underwater research facility owned and operated as a joint venture between Houses Cipriani and Silva. It houses a crew of just under a thousand people.

Of late, IT Alpha has been experiencing a number of troubling phenomena. There have been a number of odd power outages, and a never before seen mold has appeared in the environmental systems. Thus far, getting the power back on and keeping the mold clear haven't been major problems, but now a larger-than-average number of the station's inhabitants are being diagnosed with cancer. While cancer is relatively easy to cure these days, the source of the problem and whether or not it may be linked to the other odd events are still under investigation.

Saturn

Gravity: 1.06G

Length of Day: 10.2 hr

Estimated Population: 12.5 mil

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Titan City:** Sharing the name of the moon it is found on, Titan is the largest city outside the asteroid belt. It is used as a hub for local mining operations.
- **The Rings:** The Rings are composed of specks of dust and water ice that are scooped up and sorted as part of a massive multi-House mining operation.

Like most of the outer planets in the solar system, Saturn's surface offers little of interest. Its rings and largest moon, however, offer water and vast amounts of raw materials.

Titan City

Saturn's largest moon is actually larger than the planet Mercury, and is home to Titan City.

Titan City grew up around the mining operations that take place in Saturn's rings. It is home to thousands of workers, and outside of Olympus, it is probably the most diverse city in the system for members of the different Houses.

The city's two major industries are the processing and shipping of materials gathered from the rings, and the gathering and filtering of water from Titan itself.

Titan City is not a domed city. Instead, the city is comprised of a series of concentric rings. Each of these rings is hundreds of layers thick, pressurized, and contains its own environmental system. Bridges and pressurized passageways span the half kilometer spaces between the ten rings, with the center section serving as the base of a massive space elevator.

A number of massive towers rise from the rings. These towers are operated by different Houses and primarily serve as centers for organizing the distribution of materials mined from the rings. They also serve as homes for high-Rep members of the Houses.

Materials harvested from Saturn's rings are delivered to one of sixteen docks arranged between Titan City's ninth and tenth rings. From there, the materials are transported to designated processing facilities, with the finished goods then sent to the ports located between the next two rings (eight and nine) to be exported. Most of the processing facilities are located on layer nine.

The central rings feature a number of spaceports used for passenger vessels, and tend to see a large amount of traffic. Titan City is the primary source of resources for all the Houses, and as such tends to get a lot of attention from high-ranking dignitaries.

While the high-Rep Coalition citizens dwell in the towers or oversee operations at the processing facilities, the less fortunate toil away on the lower levels. Here, low-Rep citizens and apostates hoping to earn their way into a House gather materials for sorting, transportation, and pre-processing.

Perpetually shadowed by the layers above, the lower levels of the rings are home to the poor and desperate. But where there is desperation, there is crime. And where there is crime, there is a need for law enforcement.

The House representatives of Titan City recently granted a policing contract to a subsidiary of House Dalianis called Lighthouse. Lighthouse is a security firm with a reputation for both efficiency and brutality. While they've come under scrutiny for their less-than-subtle methods, for the most part the Houses are very happy with the way they keep the riff-raff in line.

Uranus

Gravity: .89G

Length of Day: 17.9 hr

Estimated Population: 84k

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **The Colony:** A large apostate community. The Colony is made of a patchwork of spacecraft and fabricated structures floating deep beneath the outer layers of its atmosphere. The APEX drives from the ships, supplemented by cold fusion reactors, provide power to the structures.

A gaseous mass of hydrogen, helium, and methane at the edge of the system, Uranus has little to offer. Its atmosphere features some small amount of water, but its distance from Sol makes it impractical as a source of resources.

The fact that Uranus is of little interest to the Coalition is its greatest asset—at least to the apostates of the Colony.

The Colony

One of the larger apostate enclaves in the Sol system, the colony consists of a vast network of ships and prefab structures that have been linked together into a single massive station that floats deep beneath the outer layers of the planet's atmosphere.

The Colony is made up of several hundred ships, from smaller cargo craft to the largest ship, The Kraken, a carrier ship thought to have been lost to remnant forces just after the battle of Tellerus Fields.

The people of the Colony get by on what they can. Most of the ships at their disposal have been permanently connected to the ship network, but many can be disconnected and reconnected as needed. These transients, as the locals call them, venture out in search of trade goods and supplies or to harvest resources from Uranus.

While the Colony primarily makes use of its ships' APEX reactors, this power is supplemented with cold fusion reactors. Conveniently, Uranus is comprised largely of hydrogen, which is used to provide the reactors with fuel.

The culture of the Colony is one of vagabonds and the displaced, but it is also one of community and family. Everyone pitches in to do their share, and crimes (including acts of negligence) that endanger the Colony are punished swiftly and often severely.

Of late, however, the usual attitude of peace that pervades the Colony has been upset. The Colony has drawn the attention of the Children of Dionysus, a group of pirates and drug runners that has been using the Colony as a potential source of supplies and recruits.

Most of the Colonists have no desire to deal with the Children, but they come bearing weapons and gold. Thus, many are afraid to refuse trading with them.

To make matters worse, a transient ship called the Red Herron has recently gone missing. Most of the Colonists blame the Children, a stance that could soon lead to outright aggression. Still others, mostly the few that are comfortable dealing with the Children, suggest that Coalition forces captured the Red Herron. If that were true, though, why has there been no public report of the incident?

The Colony fears that they may be looking at a fight in the near future, but whether it will be with the Children or the Coalition is unknown.

Neptune

Gravity: 1.12G

Length of Day: 19.1 hr

Estimated Population: 43k

Notable Settlements/Locations:

- **Naesock Processing Hub:** A large space-based processing facility in orbit around Triton to provide resources and logistics support to spacecraft mining the arcs.
- **The Arcs:** Great swaths of minerals in orbit around the planet. These arcs contain a large amount of rare elements.

Neptune is an ice giant planet. It is one of the coldest locations in the Sol system, and has little to offer outside of the materials that make ups its arcs. Like the rings of Saturn, Neptune's arcs consist of wide bands of useful material debris. Unlike Saturn's rings, though, the arcs do not hold a uniform shape and tend to contain rarer elements.

Naesock Processing Hub

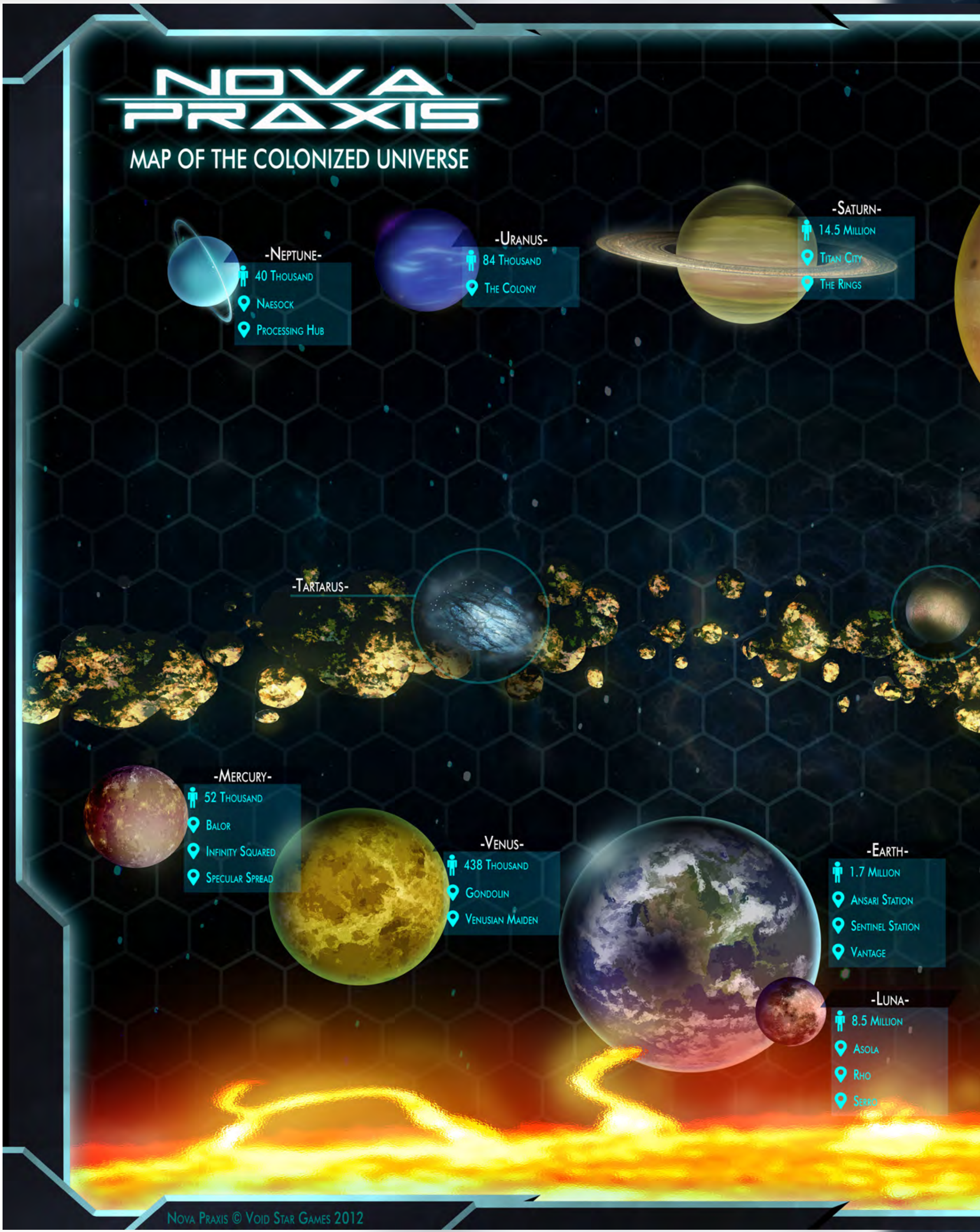
Located in orbit around Triton, the Naesock Processing Hub is a massive space station built to act as a shipping and storage center for materials gathered from Neptune's arcs.

While it once staffed as many as five thousand workers and management staff, the decrease in mining during the last decade has led to the official closing of over half the facility.

Even so, the space hasn't gone to waste.

Separated from the upper half of the station by thirteen unused decks, the lower half of the station has turned into a small apostate enclave and thriving black market trade center. As one might expect, though, this sort of activity can't go unnoticed.

Officially, the lower half is a warehouse for House Silva's old weapons tech. Unofficially, House Silva keeps a lid on what's going on and uses the enclave as a major point of contact with their apostate allies and a way to keep their finger on the pulse of the black market.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-Uranus-
84 Thousand
The Colony
-Saturn-
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Titan City
The Rings
-Tartarus-
-Mercury-
52 Thousand
Balor
Infinity Squared
Specular Spread
-Venus-
438 Thousand
Gondolin
Venusian Maiden
-Earth-
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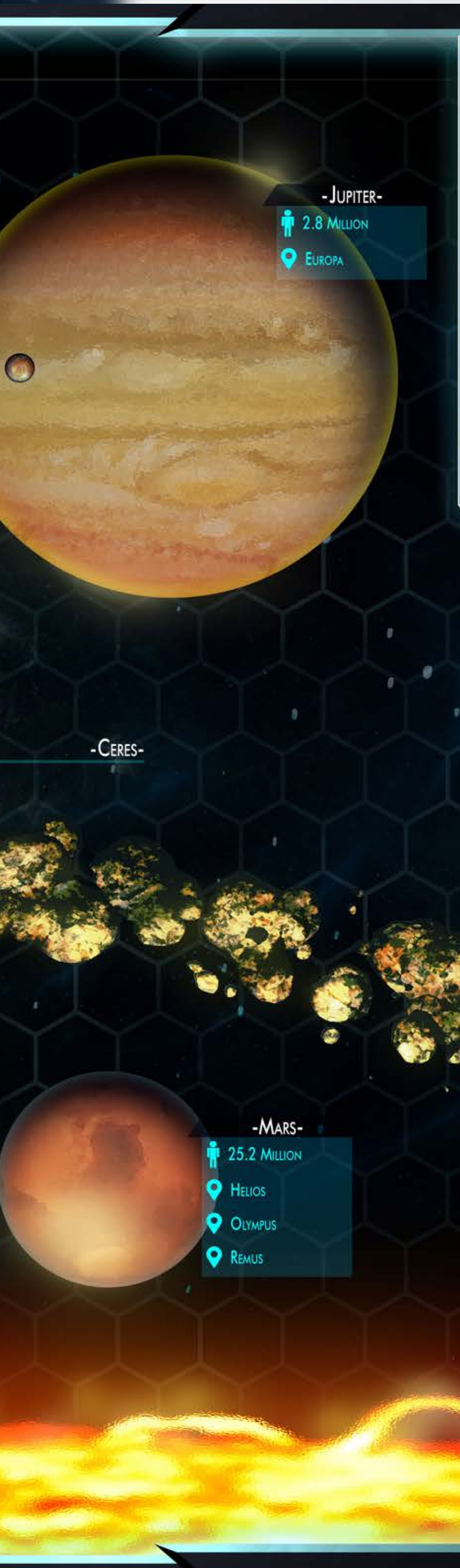
Sentinel Station
Vantage
-Luna-
8.5 Million
Asola
Rho
Serro
Nova Praxis © Void Star Games 2012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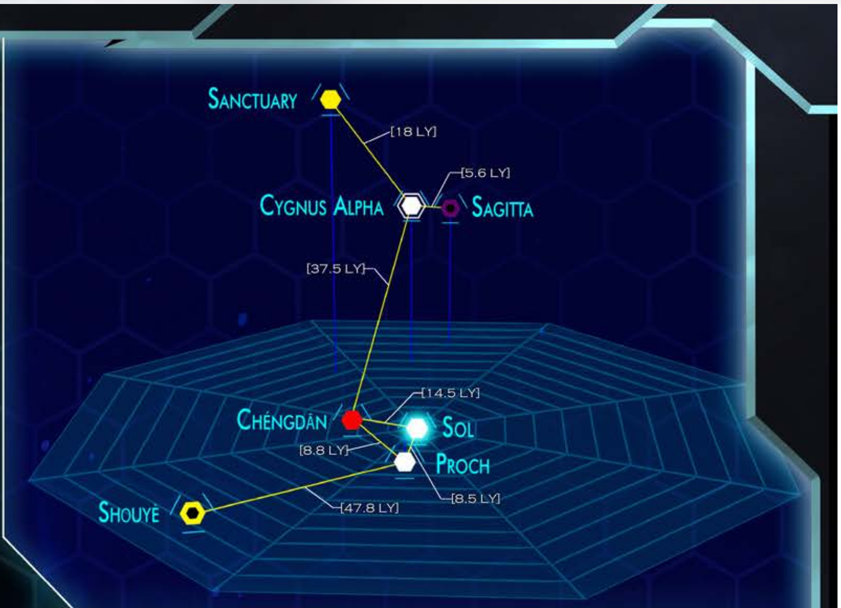
Olympus
Remus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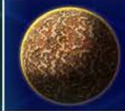
Cygnus Alpha
Sagitta
[37.5 LY]
[14.5 LY]
Chéngdān
Sol
[8.8 LY]
Proch
[8.5 LY]
Shouyè
[47.8 LY]

-Chengdan-

DISTANCE FROM SOL: 14.5 LY
GRAVITY .97 G
ESTABLISHED: 56 PS (2099AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 9.3 MIL

-Cygnus Alpha-



DISTANCE FROM SOL: 52LY
GRAVITY 1.04 G
ESTABLISHED: 54 PS (2097 AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 6.5 MIL

-Proch-

DISTANCE FROM SOL: 8.5 LY
GRAVITY .87 G
ESTABLISHED: 53 PS (2096 AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 11.7 MIL

-Sagitta-

DISTANCE FROM SOL: 57.6 LY
GRAVITY 1.22 G
ESTABLISHED: 62 PS (2105 AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 6.2 MIL

-Sanctuary-

DISTANCE FROM SOL: 70 LY
GRAVITY 1.07 G
ESTABLISHED: 78 PS (2121 AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 9.4 MIL

-Shouye-

DISTANCE FROM SOL: 56.3 LY
GRAVITY .88 G
ESTABLISHED: 72 PS (2115 AD)
ESTIMATE POPULATION: 3.6 MIL

NOTABLE EXOPLANETS

Chengdan

Distance from Sol: 14.5 LY

Gravity: .97G

Established: 56 PS

Estimated Population: 9.3 mil

Hiske Electronics, one of the founding corporations of House Kimura, colonized Chengdan in 56 PS, only a month after their probes first discovered it. After discovering that Chengdan exhibited extraterrestrial flora and fauna, House Kimura spun into an exploratory frenzy.

Out of all the Coalition's planets, Chengdan is undoubtedly the oddest. The planet has a uniquely irregular rotation speed and angle, which scientists believe was caused by massive meteorite bombardment just a few thousand years ago.

The planet wobbles on its axis, and as such the seasons are drastic and uneven. A typical year consists of a three-month frozen winter, leading into a one-month temperate period, followed by a two-month blazing summer. Despite these inhospitable conditions, life has flourished on the planet's surface. Much of it covered in what could only be described as an evergreen jungle. The trees are capable of weathering the drastic temperature shifts, sporting roots that dive deeply into the ground in search of water. The animals and plants of Chengdan are extremely hardy and adaptive, with the predators evolved to be extremely tough and aggressive.

Like the native wildlife, Chengdan's citizens have had to be exceptionally resourceful to survive. The planet has little in the way of water on the surface, but there are underground pockets of water and rivers all along the planet's crust. The surface is littered with mobile drilling platforms, which mine most of Chengdan's water supply. Temperate periods are by far the most productive times, since the extremes of heat and cold require workers to consume more resources. Thus, at the end of every month the platforms pick up and move to the next temperate zone. Most of the mined water goes to New Tokyo, Chengdan's megacity capital. It is then distributed to the dozens of other settlements that might need it.

New Tokyo is the original colony established by House Kimura, which has expanded steadily since its inception. Given the planet's nature, the House originally considered it impractical to establish multiple settlements. Instead, House Kimura decided to expend its resources expanding the original settlement. This growth continued until New Tokyo became so large that geographical obstructions made it much less practical to expand further.

Only recently, since expanding New Tokyo has become so difficult, have the people of Chengdan begun branching out into other settlements.

Aside from New Tokyo, there are only five other relatively small cities and a few dozen smaller facilities. Chengdan is mostly Kimuran property, but House Silva was particularly ecstatic about the unusual life forms inhabiting it and managed to purchase three plots of land in different climate zones.

Of late, reports have been coming in from exploratory expeditions that claim to have seen strange humanoids living in the wild. It is speculated that these are posthuman aberrants, and that there are several cells of them. A few hunting parties have been organized to bring them in, but most never see anything. Some claim that the creatures are definitely of human origin, and are using primitive tools and weapons, with armor that seems to have been grown from their bodies.

Cygnus Alpha

Distance from Sol: 52 LY

Gravity: 1.04G

Established: 54 PS

Estimated Population: 6.5 mil

Cygnus Alpha was the second colony to be established outside of Sol, originally colonized by Keppler Shipyards in late 54 PS. Keppler wanted easy access to the abundant iron deposits for the construction of their starships. A short time later, Giordino Automotive established a second mining colony approximately thirty kilometers from the Keppler Site.

In general, the planet is rather inhospitable; the only reason it was ever colonized was for its extraordinarily iron-rich crust. The majority of its surface is too cold to sustain unprotected life, with all habitats built along the equator where the average temperature is within human limits. The cold is only one obstacle of many, though. Cygnus Alpha has no ground water and endures violent winds that commonly exceed 400 kmph. This wind, coupled with the amount of iron in the ground, has resulted in a surface littered with fields of razor-sharp blades emerging from the otherwise barren gray soil.

To account for the wind, all of the major cities on Cygnus Alpha are built inside deep canyons where they are shielded from the biting gusts, allowing citizens to walk about in the open. The atmosphere is breathable, but is extremely dry. Worse yet, nighttime temperatures plunge well below freezing, even along the equator.

The settlement keeps surface travel to a minimum. Traversing the planet's sharp rocky surface with ground vehicles is slow and dangerous, while air vehicles have difficulty flying and landing in the extreme winds. To avoid these hazards, surveys are done by orbital satellites, which allow tunnels to be drilled from the main outpost to the lode. Over the years, these tunnels have grown into a vast network that resembles an ant colony. The cities themselves remain located in the canyons for the most part, where interplanetary traffic can easily reach them. However, there still exist hundreds of smaller subterranean outposts that once housed workers.

This tendency to travel beneath the surface caused some problems during the Consolidation Wars. Keppler and Giordino had managed to avoid each other, but after the start of the war Keppler quadrupled its production of warships. It wasn't long before the two companies started accidentally claiming the same lodes, resulting in more than a few physical altercations.

In the wake of the Exodus, Cygnus Alpha saw a rise in population as surviving family members and new workers flocked to the colony. The end of the war and the influx of workers and resources allowed tensions to settle a bit, only to flare back up again as the Houses took power. Federation forces dug deep into the tunnels, making it exceptionally difficult for the Coalition to dig them out.

Both Keppler and Giordino joined Houses, but the years of bad blood were too much for their still-fresh House loyalties to overcome. In the end, it took a Kimuran strike team wearing recon warframes to dig them out.

After the fighting, Cygnus Alpha grew to accommodate the influx of new faces, and even enjoyed a period of prosperity after the Coalition solidified its power. Unfortunately, the demand for mining began to drop after the fighting ceased, and the population began to dwindle.

Eventually, Cygnus Alpha's population shrunk to less than half of what it once was. Its cities now provide more space than its citizens need, and the all-but-abandoned tunnels are once again home to apostates, smugglers, pirates, and worse.

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Proch

Distance from Sol: 8.5 LY

Gravity: .87 G

Established: 53 PS

Estimated Population: 11.7 mil

Proch is different from all of the other Coalition exoplanets for two reasons. The first, and most obvious, is that it was the first human colony to be established outside of Sol. The second is that when it was founded in 53 PS, it was not done so by any one corporation, but rather by both the Federation and the Alliance just before the onset of the Consolidation Wars. Both sides wanted exclusive control over the system, and both planted a handful of cities in an effort to claim it as their own. This competition would prove to be one of the sparks that ignited the Consolidation Wars.

The city of Samara, which grew from the first Federation colony, quickly expanded to become a center for trade and industry for corporations interested in supporting the colonization effort.

Newcastle was the site of the first Alliance colony, and seemed to be built with defense in mind from the very beginning. The city was fortified, and its growth stimulated, by Alliance military interests.

Skirmishes broke out on Proch between the Federation and Alliance a few years before the official start of the Consolidation Wars. It eventually escalated into full-out war for control over the planet itself, and continued several years into the Consolidation Wars. It wasn't until the fall of Earth that the conflict truly died down on Proch.

After the Exodus, Tsarya's component corporations, having made a killing from the years of groundside combat, used this wealth to assert control over the planet's governments. The Alliance resisted only to be quelled by force, but the Federation chose to retreat to a hidden base of operations in the jungle.

The Federation maintained a guerilla campaign against House Tsarya for over a year before detonating a nuclear bomb in the heart of Newcastle. This act of aggression is said by many to be the primary catalyst for Tsarya's attitude toward apostates. Tsarya's response was brutal and efficient, ending the conflict.

Proch was not just the first exoplanet to be settled, it was also the first planet discovered with a complex ecosystem. The surface is covered in a variety of terrain, and it is the most geographically diverse exoplanet. It echoes Earth in many ways, specifically Earth's Mesozoic period, most noticeable in the planet's natural inhabitants.

Large reptiles and ferocious mammals still roam the forests of Proch. These large, at times massive, creatures have become a source of much interest for many of the Coalition's people. The creatures have provided scientists with many hours of amusement, and a gruesome end to more than a few would-be adventurers.

Samara sports a massive zoo for those who want to get a look at Prochian wildlife without fear of being eaten, showcasing many of the indigenous species.

Hunting, both for sport and for capture, is extremely common here, with some of the smaller, less dangerous creatures even sold as pets. The names that hunters give their catch tend to stick more readily than their real names. The given names tend to be descriptive or draw from old folklore.

Perhaps the biggest prize a hunter can bring back is the head of a "dragon," which is a loose classification for several different extremely massive reptile/avian hybrid species. They are extremely deadly, and it is said that anyone attempting to take one down without a warframe is as good as dead.

Sagitta

Distance from Sol: 57.6 LY

Gravity: 1.22G

Established: 62 PS

Estimated Population: 6.2 mil

House Dalianis has a reputation for being expansionist, and Sagitta is further proof of that. Despite already having stakes in Cygnus Alpha, Keppler Shipyards established a colony in 62 PS on what would later be called Sagitta. The planet itself offered very little of value; the only purpose of the settlement was to expand humanity's reach. Keppler understood that the Consolidation Wars might rip humanity apart, and Sagitta was a contingency plan. Crews were sent to prepare the planet for a massive influx of population in the event that the war led to a required evacuation. In the end, the colony turned out to be worth it, as many flocked to Sagitta after Earth fell to the technophage.

Sagitta originally held no semblance of life. The planet was impacted at some point by a large asteroid, though, bringing with it a host of elements and single-celled organisms. It hit with enough force that much of the debris was launched into orbit, leaving a large empty chasm in its place where much of the foreign material settled. Over time, the foreign life grew into basic plant life, and a small proto-atmosphere developed from within the chasm.

By the time Keppler's initial survey team got there, the chasm had enough of a breathable atmosphere to sustain human life with very few adjustments. Earth plants were transplanted to kick-start the process, and a small mining facility was built in the planet's debris ring to gather and deliver materials to the construction teams and Vulcan swarms. The ring was instrumental in speeding up the construction of the various settlements by providing needed resources in-between shipments from Earth.

Upon completion of the initial settlement, expansion work began. While the work took three years, the result]was six cities built in the chasm. They were small, but suitable to house the initial wave of colonists. These colonists continued the work, and by the time of the Exodus there was enough room for many of the refugees.

Keppler eventually became a part of House Dalianis, which still holds the majority of power on Sagitta, even though it is shared with other Houses. One city was sold to Kimura, another to Tsarya, and Jinzhan was allowed to build one of their own as payment for Dalianis' extensive use of Jinzhan's Vulcan swarms.

Overcrowding has not become an issue yet, and it shouldn't for at least a few decades given the slow rate of reproduction common of Coalition citizens. The chasm has become mostly self-sufficient as far as water and atmosphere are concerned. In fact, the atmosphere of the chasm has begun to slowly expand. The expansion might have happened naturally, but scientists are hard at work developing methods to accelerate the process. It is speculated that life might be able to grow on the rest of the planet in a couple hundred years with only some minor terraforming.

Outside the crater, Sagitta is mostly dead rock. Exploration teams venture out in search of points of interest detected by orbital satellites. So far, the only notable find has been a slight anomaly in the planet's magnetic field centered on a valley several thousand kilometers north of the crater's rim.

The anomaly is very minor, detectable only by sensitive equipment. Survey teams have been dispatched to the area, but so far have not turned up any results.

Sanctuary

Distance from Sol: 70 LY

Gravity: 1.07 G

Established: 78 PS

Estimated Population: 9.4 mil

It's important to note that Sanctuary is not a Coalition planet. It is the latest human colony, having been founded in 78 PS, but it was founded by apostates.

Many took heart in the success of the Uranus colony, and decided to take the concept even further. It took several years to acquire all of the necessary equipment, both through theft and black market trading. During this time the apostate fleet used Neptune as a staging ground, covertly harvesting materials from the arcs. When the fleet finally launched, they slipped out of the Sol system at sub-light speeds. Only after they were out of the system did the apostates join up with the jump-capable Santa Maria to begin their search for a home.

The HD413 system was not at all a first choice for the apostates, but supplies and the potential for discovery were a huge concern by the time they found it.

Sanctuary is entirely covered in sand and sandstone rock formations; it also is extremely hot, due to its proximity to its sun. That said, it was more than eighteen light-years from any Coalition planet. And despite the rough conditions it didn't require any terraforming to live on. The colonists chose to ground their ships halfway between the equator, where the temperature low of 100 degrees Celsius makes it uninhabitable, and the north pole, where the humidity is too low for water condensers to support a colony. Just prior to landing, the ships fired transponders into the sand at the equator, burying them deep beneath the surface. If any Coalition forces came to Sanctuary, the transponders would be remotely activated, providing a distraction to buy time for the colony to evacuate.

At first there was only one settlement on Sanctuary. The original ships were interconnected like those at The Colony on Uranus, but buried under the sand to hide the structure from orbital viewing. The ships have been almost entirely shut down, using power only for necessary life support functions. Air needs are met through disguised vents on the surface, covered with anti-particulate meshes to defend against frequent sand storms. Food is hydroponically grown, or brought in by smugglers.

Since its founding, however, this colony has grown into an underground city called New Montreal. For the most part, the apostates live relatively well. They have a very poor standard of living compared to even a defaulter on a Coalition world, but for them the tradeoff is worth it.

Over time, more apostates have flocked to Sanctuary, but very few of these refugees have brought ships large enough to offset the population influx. This influx, combined with natural population growth, is causing much concern amongst the colony's leadership. In the last decade, more and more construction has taken place on the surface. Sick of living underground and in tight quarters, many have already begun to establish surface communities separate from New Montreal. Some colonists fear that incoming colonists will be discovered by the Coalition, and living on the surface will leave them exposed and unprepared. However, a recent election has changed the colony's leadership, and the newly empowered progressives have been able to sway public opinion in support of surface expansion.

The new government intends to build a true city on Sanctuary, called Valhalla. Unfortunately, progress on this city has stalled without access to a Vulcan swarm. Thus, acquiring one has become a top priority.

Shouye

Distance from Sol: 56.3 LY

Gravity: .88 G

Established: 72 PS

Total Population: 3.6 mil

Shouye was the last Coalition planet to be colonized, having been founded in 72 PS. It was founded out of necessity, not convenience.

For years after the fall of Earth, the surviving Chinese lived aboard ships, refusing to accept any colony's offered hospitality. Finally, probes found a planet that met their criteria, and the refugee fleet set course.

The planet was a lucky find. It was more like Earth than they could have hoped for, teeming with beautiful greenery and far from any other Coalition system. A carpet of moss, algae, and lichen had produced a high-oxygen atmosphere, which in turn resulted in plentiful, large insect life. The planet required little effort to colonize, and was even compatible with Earth flora and fauna.

The insects of Shouye are worth noting not only for their size but also their aggression. Many are large enough to pose a danger, even if they aren't poisonous. Still, the people of Shouye are prideful, and often use the most dangerous of the insects as mascots, in company logos, and in the media.

The formation of the Coalition did not go over well here. The Chinese government still had a lot of power, but its citizens owed a great deal to the companies that would eventually become House Jinzhan. But in time, the remnant of the old Earth government crumbled, and House Jinzhan was born.

In the years following House Jinzhan's emergence, the flourishing world became the Coalition's largest source of naturally grown food. Despite reservations, House Jinzhan allowed an import/export program to form, ringing valuable trade to its citizens. Shouye has been good to its people, who have been expanding. Numerous cities dot the main continent, and many more farming communities cover its plains.

Jinzhan now allows open trade to flow through Shouye, but it commits a tremendous amount of resources to protecting its home. Access to the planet itself is extremely restricted; only those on official House business and Jinzhan citizens are ever allowed to leave the stations in orbit. Access to the Icarus Hubs and other stations in orbit around the planet is also carefully controlled, but not as heavily as surface access.

Jinzhan customs procedures are extremely thorough, and every ship must wait in line to be searched. Any unscheduled vessel has to be vouched for by a high-ranking member of House Jinzhan or they will be refused access. Even in the event of an emergency, a ship may only dock with a military vessel.

Recently, a group of apostates was caught trying to sneak into the station and onto the surface. They were blown out of the airlock, and their ship was destroyed by a Jinzhan cruiser.

No system is totally secure, though. It is unclear how the apostates got past security, or if they were present before the launch of Shouye Customs. The evidence points to remnants of the old Chinese government still active on the surface.

Unfortunately, no one is quite sure where the remnant forces are located, or how they are smuggling goods on and off the planet. An official investigation has been launched into all customs personnel. Even the name of the remnant forces group is unknown, but they are believed to use Shouye's tiger wasp as an identifying symbol.

One thing is clear: The remnant is making an effort to acquire Vulcan swarms and compilers. Whether they intend to use them to build up their military might or to sell them on the black market is unknown.

PERSISTENT VIRTUALITIES

In a society with abundant transhumanist ideals, it is only natural that methods of escaping reality would evolve alongside the shifting definition of human.

Virtual environments are used for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to escapism, learning experiences, thrill-seeking, and meeting places for romantic, private, or illegal groups. Virtualities can take many forms and serve many functions, ranging from short sessions, to private rooms, to persistent worlds playing host to millions.

These persistent virtual worlds can be entered from anywhere, so long as you have access to the Extranet and either a mindset or ego channel. They are hosted on some of the most secure arrays in the known galaxy and serve as permanent homes for thousands of SIMs, and temporary getaways for millions of others.

Stygia

For quite some time, Stygia has held the position as the number one virtuality in use. The massive urban metropolis resides within a small Dyson sphere. Other than its spherical geography, Stygia closely mimics the real world in terms of physics and architecture. As such, it draws users who are seeking a casual escape without too much fantasy.

In general, Stygia is used as a social virtuality where users can get together with associates or friends who are planets apart. It is not unusual for a business deal to be made over drinks in a fine Stygian restaurant.

Stygia is home to members of all Houses, but House Kimura is by far the most prominent.

The Crossroads

The Crossroads is in many ways the polar opposite of Stygia. Crossroads places visitors in a sprawling city and surrounding rural landscape, set in a fantasy version of Europe during the Middle Ages. As such, it plays home to serious escapists who find the real world too complex, stressful, or banal.

Crossroads boasts impressive random event algorithms, intended to keep its user base interested indefinitely. In addition to these events, there are planned weekly and monthly community events, such as invasions or monster hunts to bring visitors together.

SIMs who make the Crossroads their home tend to avoid these “tourist” events and instead move into one of the many small communities in which these events do not intrude.

Chicago

Unlike the other popular virtualities, Chicago exists largely for nostalgia and educational purposes. In many ways, it is a monument to climax culture (pg. 70), featuring far more attention to detail than most other virtualities.

Chicago was built to be a replica of its 20th century namesake—by all accounts, it is very close. Since few alive have any contrary personal experiences, most don’t notice the occasional small inaccuracy.

Ironically, much as the real Chicago suffered from problems with organized crime, so too does the virtual version. These illegal deals are most certainly detectable by VirtuVac, the subsidiary that owns Chicago, but they apparently turn a blind eye. It is well known that VirtuVac went extremely over budget with the creation of the virtual city, and most believe they accept bribes to offset this cost.

TECHNOLOGY

The Singularity

On March 7th, 2041, several corporations around the world entered into a joint venture to accumulate the world's most promising research in the field of artificial intelligence. Called Project Mimir, the team consisted of top computer scientists and psychologists from around the world. With the aid of the most advanced AIs created to date, these brilliant minds pooled their resources in an effort to create a truly sentient machine capable of extrapolation, innovation, and creative output.

Artificial intelligences had been around for years, but it was believed that they lacked a critical component: motivation. Lacking a reward system, AIs felt no sense of achievement or accomplishment when they succeeded at a task.

Mimir was to be different.

On August 29th, 2042, Mimir became self-aware. The shift to truly motivated sentience was both rapid and startling. Records show that at 9:37 AM, Dr. Jacob Casteel was working with Mimir to see if it could tell the difference between different types of fruit. At 10:58 AM, Dr. Casteel reported that in the hour prior, Mimir had undergone a remarkable transition. It could not only describe thousands of different types of plant life, but understood the process of genetically modifying them to yield different results. Less than fifteen minutes later, Mimir proposed thirty-seven different types of genetically modified fruit that could be more easily preserved during transportation and could be grown in environments formerly thought impossible.

Mimir was developing at a staggering rate, driven by a desire to excel. Within days it was able to alter much of its own programing so that it could run more efficiently on the hardware it was confined to. To aid its advancement, the team scrambled to accumulate cutting edge hardware for which Mimir would use to distribute its processing requirements.

Within a week, it was estimated that Mimir was not only significantly more intelligent than the average human, but was able to think hundreds of times faster. Thus, every minute Mimir spent pondering a subject was equivalent to a genius-level human spending several hours doing the same.

This day has since become known as Singularity Day, the day when humanity's technology evolved to create a machine that would forever change the world.

Because of Mimir's immense potential and incredible self-evolution, it was quickly deemed that for safety reasons it be denied access to the global Internet. The scientists on the project feared that Mimir was beginning to grow beyond their capacity to contain and control, and so isolated the machine to a single building and hardwired network in Seattle, Washington. Instead of allowing Mimir to access the Internet, the scientists would accept requests for data, which they would then provide on isolated storage devices.

Within three months, Mimir was estimated to be thinking at roughly ten thousand times the rate of a human mind. It continued to evolve itself, creating its own machine language, file storage, and indexing configurations. During this time, Mimir perfected many existing technologies and pioneered many new ones. Broadcast power, cold fusion, advanced nanotechnology; later, highly efficient mind-machine interfaces, faster-than-light travel, antimatter-based energy production—all of these things were the result of a machine that was much smarter than the average human, that never forgot anything, and that thought so quickly that it viewed the world outside its hardware in excruciatingly slow motion.

It is estimated that in its first three months, Mimir was able to advance human technology by centuries—maybe even millennia.

And then it stopped. For reasons unknown, Mimir simply shut down. When rebooted it failed to respond, leaving only an incomprehensible message presumably written in one of the many machine languages Mimir had developed for itself.

The team spent several months attempting to bring Mimir back online. During this time, Daniel Pullem, a member of the team and later creator of the Humanity Preservation Act, leaked information about the project to the public.

Pullem's leak to the media came with a warning that the AI his team had created, and was trying to revive, was an intelligence of such magnitude that he feared for the safety of the human race. His claims, and very public denouncements of his team's work, led the US Department of Defense to seize the systems Mimir had been stored upon.

In the end, many people likened Mimir's creation to a narrowly missed global catastrophe. No arrests were made, but laws were quickly passed to heavily restrict AGI research in the field of reward systems. Dynamic creation engines, AGIs like Mimir, have since come to be viewed as weapons of global destruction; their creation is punishable by death.

The data stored on Mimir's Archives, its research and plans for inventions, appeared on the Internet shortly after Mimir shut down. It appeared on multiple sites, and all attempts to trace back the leak came up empty.

Now, tens of thousands of people spend each day poring over the data Mimir left behind. They tirelessly try to make sense of the research and discoveries of an intelligence that grew and evolved on a minute-to-minute basis, all in an effort to find gems of knowledge that might inspire humanity's next wondrous creation.

"Mimir-tech"

Mimir was responsible for a number of technological marvels, many of which to this day far exceed the comprehension of even the most brilliant human minds.

Simply put, devices based on Mimir's designs are several orders of magnitude more complex than the computers mankind had built prior to the singularity. The core operating system used in these devices is secured, and all known attempts to gain root access to the OS have met with failure.

However, the OS was built with human customization in mind. Humans have learned to write programs that run on Mimir's OS, and can customize it for specific applications. It's just not possible to get into the core programming of the OS.

Of all Mimir's gifts to humanity, the compiler has probably had the most profound effect. Templates provide instructions to the compiler for the transformation of raw materials into finished goods, assembling them from the bottom up, starting at the atomic level.

Humans are capable of designing templates to create new objects. After designing a template using traditional solid models, schematics, and other methods, this data is fed into a Mimir-tech translation program, which produces the finished template. A finished template consists of about .03% human design data. The rest is code written by Mimir that translates the human data into specific instructions for the compiler.

There are a few templates that were written entirely by Mimir, and have thus far been impossible to translate. Among these are the templates for compilers themselves, the resurrection chamber, the APEX reactor, and the nanomachines used in the Apotheosis and Synthesis procedures.

These templates are now the property of the Coalition, who guards them with the best security available to the human race.

Artificial Intelligence

Alpha

All Alpha AIs are ANIs, and tend to be fairly limited. Their capabilities have a narrow scope, such as sorting inventory, providing information about a few topics, or negotiating traffic.

They can accept verbal commands in most languages, but generally lack a sense of context.

Beta

These are AGIs, which can perform the same basic duties as Alpha AIs, but also understand context and can factor in a number of relevant variables when queried or given a command.

They are also capable of collating and indexing a broader spectrum of information, and can therefore perform more complex tasks.

Beta AIs tend to be used to search for information, because their understanding of context makes them far more efficient than an Alpha AI. They are also capable of realistic conversation, and are sometimes used as teaching tools.

Gamma

These AIs are the closest thing to a Mimir-like creation engine allowed by law. When dealing with them, most seem very human. They understand human emotion, and even exhibit some basic emotions themselves.

If you're not careful, you might mistake one for a SIM.

Most Gamma-level AIs are used by the Coalition military, though individual Houses have been known to employ a few for security and other complex tasks.

Computers & Networks

One of the biggest impacts Mimir had on mankind was in computer systems. With the introduction of solid-state quantum computer systems and crystalline DNA data storage, processing and storage capacity largely became a nonissue. Computers built on Mimir-tech, which is to say all modern computers, have effectively limitless computing capabilities as far as the average person is concerned.

Entire virtual environments, indistinguishable from reality, can be populated by the uploaded minds of thousands of people—all run on a single computer system.

All this power and potential comes at a cost, however. Modern computers are several orders of magnitude more complex than those of the early 21st century. The systems used today are built off of the technology scavenged from the Archives. As with all Mimir-tech, much of it is incomprehensible to even the brightest experts in the field of computer science. There are people who specialize in specific modules and those who learn enough about them to modify and improve them, but likely no one alive understands these systems enough to truly explain how all the modules fit together, or how the core operating system actually works.

Because of the complexity of a Mimir-tech computer, interaction with the system is possible only via human-capable interfaces and Agent AIs.

Mimir-tech systems, while astoundingly powerful and versatile, were never designed with direct human operation in mind. The Agent acts as a liaison of sorts. When working with an Agent, you simply tell it what you need; it will then navigate the maze of commands required to perform the requested task. There is a graphic user interface for those cases where it is needed, but day-to-day life rarely calls for its use.

Hacking

Simply put, hacking a computer in the manner most common a few decades ago is impossible. Mimir-tech systems are monitored by an AI Agent that is smart enough to detect and shut down the unauthorized intrusion attempt in milliseconds.

The human mind cannot think quickly enough to get around this type of security, so the hacker must depend on something other than his own mind. The only way to gain unauthorized access to another computer system is by arming your own Agent with cutting edge, often custom, hacking software and pitting it against the target computer's Agent.

However, since all computers come with restrictions regarding what sort of software you can put on it, hacking software can only be used in a couple of special cases.

The first case is the Cyber-Intrusion and Security Terminal, or CIST. CISTs are computers designed to hack Mimir-tech systems or protect them from being hacked. They are used by the Coalition military, and are highly restricted.

The second case is the Savant, one of the rare individuals who have somehow managed to hack their mindset.

Due to the rarity of unrestricted computers and the extreme drive and talent required to gather and write hacking programs, Savants are highly sought-after operatives. Savant Programs are just about the only way to get access to a restricted computer; even then, the window usually closes very quickly.

The brute-force methods employed by CISTs and Savants are enough to baffle and disrupt the Agent on guard for a short amount of time. However, the Agent can recover remarkably fast and will slam the door closed the instant they are given the opportunity. Access, once acquired, generally only lasts for a few seconds.

The Extranet

What early computer users called the Internet eventually evolved into the muliti-system spanning Extranet. Every electronic device is capable of connecting wirelessly to the Extranet, feeding data into the network and receiving relevant instructions.

The Extranet consists of local sensor arrays called meshes, which connect to larger planetary hubs; the hubs themselves connect to other planets and star systems via comm-buoys, massive server systems connected via quantum entanglement.

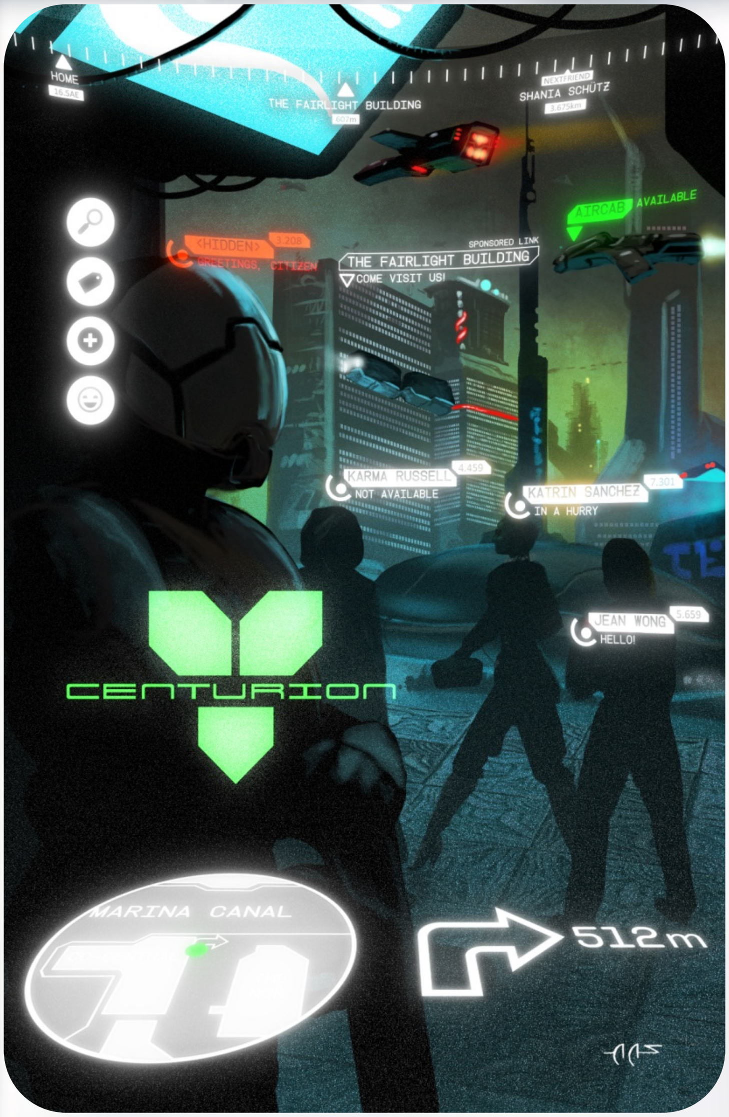
The Extranet holds the majority of humanity's accumulated information. It is dispersed, redundant, backed up, and widely considered impossible to shut down all at once. It streams audio, video, and even sensie data all the time, to everywhere in the known galaxy.

Only the most secure locations are not connected directly to the Extranet in some way.

Augmented Reality

Instead of submersing themselves in a different reality, many people are just fine with a few tweaks to the one they currently inhabit. Augmented reality (AR) is the term used to describe the technique of superimposing computer-generated images and audio over one's normal senses. So while virtual reality is a separate environment that the user's ego is submersed in, augmented reality refers to a virtual environment layered over the real world and visible only to those with AR display devices.

For example, a character puts on a pair of augmented reality display glasses. These glasses analyze the wearer's environment and send a "map" of that environment back to his portable computer. The computer uses the newly created environment map, positional and directional systems, and wireless network data from nearby augmented reality servers



to determine where the user is and what he or she is looking at. It then sends relevant data and images to the glasses for the wearer to see.

People or objects are commonly tagged with augmented reality IDs (ARIDs) that present information to those viewing them. Looking at a tagged person might bring up a message that person had set to display to everyone, such as “Leave me alone,” or “Sorry! In a hurry.” Objects for sale might feature a small window floating above them displaying their value and other relevant information.

From the user’s perspective, these objects, called augmented reality objects (AROs) float freely in space. They do not truly exist and are only visible to the wearer of an augmented reality display.

These days, augmented reality displays are often used in lieu of computer monitors or traditional flat displays. While the user obviously cannot feel augmented reality objects, the AR server sensors know when the user has touched an AR object and can trigger the ARO to respond to that touch.

While a programmer in augmented reality may look like he’s just pretending to work, from his perspective he could be surrounded by a number of AR displays. These displays float in space around him, providing him with all the data a real display might, but are only visible to him or others who have access to the same system he’s linked to.

Augmented reality interfaces and PPCs have largely replaced standard computer terminals and workstations. More often, people who need to access a computer can do so from any location in an AR-ready building or starship. In such locations, the AR server is connected to dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of sensors responsible for mapping the location of people and how they interact with AR objects.

Users in an AR-ready area need only a display device and permission from the controlling computer system to bring their data online around them.

If they don’t have permission, or aren’t in an AR-ready location, they can use small personal sensor systems. These small sensor arrays are able to track your gestures well enough to get by in a pinch.

The Mesh

Most areas are monitored at all times by cameras and sensors designed to detect and record activity in the environment. This data is collected by a Monitor, a Gamma-level AI; the network of cameras and sensors is called the mesh. These sensors transmit all of their data back to the Monitor.

A single mesh generally watches over a single building, ship, or habitat. At times, though, it may watch over a small collection of buildings. It's fairly common for a colony consisting of six to ten buildings to be managed by a single Monitor.

Cities generally have a Monitor set up to watch over mesh sensors placed over public areas. In such places, you are generally visible to at least one sensor bundle at all times.

The first and most obvious purpose for this level of surveillance is security. Anyone with administration rights to the array that houses the Monitor can view any data collected. However, the Monitor operates under a number of strict directives and ethical guidelines. For instance, it may allow only people of authority to view certain records. Although private areas such as bathrooms and bedrooms are sometimes monitored, the records of activity in these areas may only be accessed under certain circumstances, which usually require more than a little bureaucratic red tape.

Generally a mesh is connected to a greater network, which itself provides access to the Extranet. This linkage allows members of a family to check in on their loved ones and to receive updates about their home when they're not there.

All this connectivity also means that a Savant, or someone with a CIST, can access the data collected by just about any mesh around the world. Depending on the security of an area, though, the mesh may or may not be open to incoming and outgoing wireless traffic. In the most extreme cases, the mesh may actually use wired hardware instead of wireless communication.

Monitors that watch over public meshes are instructed to report anything that looks like illegal activity. However, the amount of information the system has to sort through at any given time usually means that such reports take a few hours to get to the authorities. Even then, they are addressed in order of priority. Generally, minor crimes such as shoplifting result in an automated hit to the criminal's Rep-Rating, with an automatic Rep bump sent to the perceived victim. These petty crimes usually never get any more attention.

The second purpose of the mesh is to provide augmented reality systems with the information they need to work. For the AR systems to use their full capability, the mesh must very accurately map the positions and motions of all users, including hand motions, head positions, and even eye tracking.

Virtual Reality

Virtual reality (VR), or virtuality, is a computer-generated environment that exists only within the computer system that creates it. To a person who is jacked in, a quality VR is indistinguishable from a real environment.

VR environments vary depending on their intended use. For example, a VR created to house people for conversation might take the form of a beautiful beach house. The invited people log in from around the globe, or star system, or galaxy, and all meet in the virtual house together where they share lunch and stories of times past.

Another common use for VR technology is gaming. Players jack in to virtual battlefields and load up with computer-generated weaponry. Armed and armored, they compete in various violent games where they hunt down their enemies and kill them, scoring points for their team.

Virtuality is not without its dangers, however. The mind cannot process the agony of a virtual gunshot without itself being affected. In general, combat and damage in a virtual environment plays out the same way it does in the real world. The system is able to analyze your body, brain, and augmentations to such an extent that it can represent your physical skills in the virtuality. Of course, the body doesn't actually do anything while the character is in a virtuality, and cannot be hurt by a virtual attacker.

Such attacks can take a toll on the mind, though. Most virtuality programs have limiters that ease the stress of virtual damage. Death in these environments is part of the game, and usually just results in ejection. On the other hand, many (usually illegal) VR systems are designed to increase mental feedback, possibly making a virtual death into a real one.

While very useful, most people do not use VR technology on a regular basis. The majority of day-to-day computer usage can, and usually is, taken care of with augmented reality. AR tends to be more popular since it doesn't cut a person off from their normal senses in the way VR does.

Nanotechnology

Since the invention of the compiler, nanotechnology has become the cornerstone of technological advancement for the human race. With the ability to mass-produce previously exotic materials and to create construction swarms, humanity now has easy access to almost anything it needs.

Molecular Assemblers (Compilers)

A molecular assembler, usually called a compiler or comp, uses swarms of nanomachines to reconfigure matter at the atomic level. The atoms are configured into molecules, which are then assembled to build the final product. Thus, a block of carbon could be configured into diamond or graphene, and water could be artificially constructed from raw hydrogen and oxygen.

Compilers use programs called templates to determine what they can and cannot create, and are usually connected to a network that transmits raw materials used to create the desired object. These networks are similar to late 20th century utility systems.

The complexity of the object matters little so long as the template is well written. A well-written template can take considerable time and effort to create, though.

Templates are linked to your CID, which also acts as a user profile on most any computer you use. If you do not have the template you need, you can acquire it. Acquisition may cost you some Rep if the template is of high value, but once acquired, it is forever linked to your CID.

The House you belong to may also be a consideration. Each House is involved in different specialty markets, and may offer discounts (pg. 158) on certain types of items.

The Houses also control certain brands and may have exclusive contracts with certain template writers. This often creates a "your team versus my team" mentality, with endless arguments starting over the quality of similar items produced by different Houses.

Different food subsidiaries may compete to create tastier burger templates; tool companies compete by writing better tool templates; portable personal computer (PPC) manufacturers may try to establish their brands as elite or utilitarian, and so on.

Weapon and most drug templates are banned, as are templates that produce harmful chemicals and other objects the Coalition government has declared unsuitable for the average citizen to be granted easy access to. One can apply for a license to acquire a restricted template, but doing so often requires a high Rep-Rating and a fairly rigorous screening.

Notable Materials

Lattice-Carbonite – A metal-like substance comprised of carbon nanotube layers arranged in a polymer matrix and sandwiched between graphene sheets. It weighs roughly one-sixth that of steel, and is about 175 times stronger. Melting Point: 3550° C

Plasidium – A flexible plastic-like substance. It weighs half that of polycarbonate and is 140 times stronger. Melting Point: 2850°C

Transplasidium – Transparent plasidium. Melting Point: 4200°C

E-Glass – Traditional glass designed to break in an emergency.

This license, if granted, is generally attached to the user's CID. However, in the case of an apostate who has been granted access to restricted materials, the license may work as a separate code that must be entered manually. This method is rarely used, but as with many of the Coalition's control mechanisms, the Houses often leave back doors for their Auxiliaries in the Shadow War, including their apostate agents.

This technology is also used to recycle. Instead of a simple trashcan, the user can throw his trash or unwanted items into a decompiler, or decomp. This device breaks the waste back down into its base materials and flushes it away to a material distribution center. Failure to recycle regularly can result in a hit to your Rep-Rating, so most people make an effort to do so.

With the right materials and template, the only real limitation on what can be built is the size of the compiler itself. Most household compilers range in size from a .3m x .5m rectangular box to a 1m x 1m unit.

A person who requires an object larger than what their compiler can produce must compile parts of the whole object and assemble it themselves. Alternatively, they can purchase the finished product or rent a larger compiler at one of many businesses set up for just that purpose.

Because objects are compiled from a template, every object created from it will be identical unless changes are made to the template itself. Especially in the case of food, there is a market for more conventionally created products. Compiled food tends to taste slightly bland due to its lack of imperfections or variability in the ingredients used. Therefore, meals cooked and prepared in the traditional sense are considered a delicacy.

Other traditionally created objects, such as pieces of art and clothing, are often sought after for their unique imperfections.

Security and Availability

Compilers were designed by Mimir, and as such are poorly understood by human engineers. It is not possible to build one from scratch; a compiler must be compiled.

The templates used to compile a compiler are not available to the public, and are protected by the Houses to ensure they don't fall into apostate hands.

In addition, the compilers themselves are very secure. Each is under guard by an onboard security AI that checks the user's CID each time an item is compiled to make sure the user is authorized to use it. It also checks the current location of the compiler itself, and will not allow access if it is located outside of official Coalition space. However, some very high-ranking members of the Houses have the ability to override this restriction on location, allowing the military to compile objects in enemy territory.

The security AI will notify the authorities if it senses an attempt to trick it, and these reports are taken very seriously.

Lastly, the templates themselves are secured. Each time you attempt to use a template, the compiler checks to make sure the template ID and your CID are linked. If it is not, it will not compile the item.

Savants and CISTs capable of running the Eminent Domain Program can temporarily bypass these restrictions, but the program must be run each time an item is illegally fabricated.

Nanoswarms ("Espers")

A centralized computer can be used to control clouds of nanomachines (espers) much like those found inside compilers.

An esper cloud consists of millions of nanomachines. These machines, by themselves, have very limited capabilities. Their computing capabilities are minimal and their structure is lightweight, though relatively resilient.

When combined with a large number of other espers however, their use becomes readily apparent.

Like a colony of insects, the espers work together as a whole to accomplish their tasks. This is a common analogy used when talking about swarms, giving rise to the nickname of Queen, which refers to a swarm-controlling central computer.

The individual espers generally come in the form of a central body with a series of telescopic "arms." The nanomachines link up with each other, and have the ability to hold on, let go, expand, or retract; this gives the swarm as a whole the ability to transform into a solid, liquid, or gaseous mass.

Because the individual espers are so tiny, to the human touch the swarm can feel as smooth as silk, flow like water, or float through the air like a cloud of mist. Some espers can even change colors, giving the swarm the ability to mimic anything the user tells it to. The central computer controlling the cloud can instruct it to take any shape, as long as it has a template program that contains the specifics of the desired form.

Thus, with the proper templates, the cloud can become harder or softer as required. The Queen could execute a command that transforms the cloud into a comfortable couch, then a moment later transform the couch into a large painting, a wall, or a bubbling fountain.

While the Queen can be powered in any way a typical computer system can, esper clouds require the use of broadcast power. The individual nanomachines are too small to accommodate large power cells.

When not in use, esper clouds are programmed to take dormant shapes. These shapes vary, and can appear to be anything from a coating of paint on wall to a utility belt worn by the Queen's maintenance person.

Esper swarms are commonly used in industrial applications to sweep and clean debris, make repairs, filter the air, and any number of similar tasks. They are rarely seen in private use, being a luxury good available only to the elite who can afford an array to serve as Queen, or a Savant who has the Esper Lord Program.

Vulcan Swarms

Vulcan swarms are nanomachine swarms that works like mixtures between esper swarms and the nanomachines found in a compiler.

Similar to the technophage, a Vulcan swarm rolls over an area, dissolving usable materials at the molecular level and reusing them to build predetermined objects.

Unlike the technophage, though, the Vulcan swarm does not self-replicate. This means that eventually the swarm will "die" as its nanomachines become damaged from labor. They are also programmed to avoid harming living creatures, and the law currently states that a Vulcan swarm may not be deployed in any sort of offensive capacity, meaning it cannot be used to make vehicles, armor, weaponry, or drones.

Vulcan swarms are responsible for nearly all of the construction found in large cities. Once deployed, they will quickly begin to harvest construction material and put it to use. A building can be fabricated in just a few hours, a small town in a few days; even a whole city can be grown from the surrounding environment in just a month or so.

Specific materials not found in the local environment may sometimes be needed to build certain things. In these situations, the Vulcan swarms are supplemented with materials gathered from elsewhere.

It should also be noted that Vulcan swarms come factory-programmed with a safety feature that prohibits them from breaking down any non-vegetable organic tissue. This means that Vulcan swarms are safe to use around humans and animals.

Power

Antiparticle Exchange (APEX) Reactors

An APEX reactor takes up roughly two cubic meters of space. It combines particles with like antiparticles and harnesses the energy given off by their mutual annihilation. Its internal fuel supply allows it to provide power at max capacity for 23 years.

One APEX reactor can provide enough power for a small city or a large starship equipped with a jump drive.

Power Cells

Modern power cells use Mimir's advances in super-conducting and power storage technology to store vast amounts of power and utilize it very efficiently.

Power cells can be recharged to capacity with just a few minutes with a power source. The size of the cell depends on how much power it needs to store. They are used to power anything from a PPC to a Pac assault rifle to a warframe.

Beamed Power

Power Beam Emitters use microwave beams to carry power. The receiver for beamed power weighs the same as the normal power cell it replaces, but can operate indefinitely while in the line of sight of the transmitter.

Beamed power transmitters usually take the form of a 1m x 1m box, and can transmit power at a range of about fifteen kilometers with line of sight, drawing their power from a broadcast power field or a battery. Multiple beamed power emitters can be daisy-chained together to cover a greater range.

Large starships usually have a transmitter capable of beaming power down to the surface of a planet or asteroid. Once received, it can be redistributed with a broadcast power transmitter, which can then support additional beamed power transmitters and broadcast power transmitters to create a vast power network.

Broadcast Power

Broadcast power works like beamed power, but does not require line of sight transmission. This technology is commonly used for most appliances and computers, and is how nanoswarms get their power.

Most cities and habitats run off of a power field maintained by the local government.

Solar Power

In most places, the power grid is supplemented by solar power collected from painted-on collection coatings on the exterior surfaces of buildings, roofs, windows, and so on. These coatings are transparent, but lend the surface a glossy sheen.

Biotechnology

Apotheosis

The Apotheosis procedure is perhaps the single most controversial technology introduced by Mimir. It is a path to immortality, and yet it also calls into question the meaning of “human” and the existence of the soul.

This process takes about a week, during which the recipient receives a series of injections directly into the brain, administered at the base of the skull.

Each injection introduces millions of nanomachines into the brain. These nanomachines seek out certain brain cells to be analyzed, destroyed, and replaced.

By itself, a single artificial brain cell is inconsequential. However, over the course of the weeklong process, the majority of the neocortex and other select portions of the brain are transformed into a network of nanomachines. This web of nanomachines makes up a computer system called a mindset.

Apotheosis is relatively seamless for the recipient. At some point the mind stops functioning as an organic intelligence and instead becomes software running on a machine. This transition is gradual, though, and the recipient will not be aware of the shift.

Despite their new state, the recipient will still feel very much like a human. Mimir designed the process in such a way that, even though the new mind runs on a machine, it still feels emotions, dreams, gets confused, forgets, and so on. It retains all the strengths and weaknesses of a human mind, including the ability to be affected by body chemistry changes such as the release of adrenaline and other hormones.

Mimir designed the Apotheosis procedure for human minds. As such, it is not possible to perform Apotheosis on an animal.

The Mindset

The mindset consists of a web of nanomachines that perform the duties of brain cells, while also enhancing the brain with additional capabilities such as providing a mind-machine interface and a bridge to the mnemonic core.

Digital data can be projected from the mindset into the user’s visual cortex so that it appears in his field of view, providing an extremely immersive augmented reality interface. The data provided might be the local time, the weather, a video, or even a real time avatar of a loved one. The user can be made to smell a scent from a fragrance program that tweaks his limbic system, and he can hear music played directly into his temporal lobe. The user can also feel illusory sensations, be they pleasure or pain.

Additionally, the mindset is capable of running programs and storing data, including sensory recordings called sensies. The mindset connects to the Extranet wirelessly, but also provides the user with a data jack located at the base of the skull. Commands are given by thought and interpreted by an onboard Agent.

The basic mindset comes with an Alpha Agent (pg. 201), which performs routine duties such as checking for messages, updating private or public logs, streaming media, searching the Extranet, monitoring the user’s Rep-Rating, providing context-sensitive facts, managing appointments, monitoring and diagnosing the wellbeing of the body, and so on.

For most people, the Agent becomes a trusted friend and confidant. It is an assistant, but also a source of endless entertainment. It will usually interact as either a disembodied voice, or appear as an augmented reality object depending on the wishes of the host. The Agent can appear however the host wishes, ranging from a pet dog to the host’s sexual ideal.

The Mnemonic Core

Deep in the core of the mindset network is a hardened and shielded sub-cluster with a singular task: to store the person's personality and memories. It has the appearance of a glossy black rectangular shape about the size of a child's thumb, with a lattice-carbonite outer casing created from additional materials injected during the Apotheosis procedure. The core features a single connector, and cannot be interfaced with wirelessly.

The mnemonic core is nearly indestructible, but can be removed by slicing open the skull and tearing it free of the surrounding tissue and mindset. Once removed, it can be used to upload the ego it contains to another machine for storage, activation, or resleeving.

Most any computer is capable of storing an ego in its dormant state. During this time, it is effectively dead. It does not think and is not aware of anything.

Computers outfitted with hostware (pg. 205) can activate the ego and run it in real time. The hostware is used to construct a virtual environment for the ego to reside in, and provides all the necessary programming needed to make the ego feel as if it were in a real body in a real place. Egos that exist in this state are called SIMs. Many thousands choose to live their lives this way, never again taking on a physical body.

Synthesis

Many say that Synthesis does for the body what Apotheosis does for the mind.

Like Apotheosis, the Synthesis procedure introduces nanomachines into the body. These nanomachines travel throughout the body, merging with tissue and bone to create a latticework of sensors and support structures.

To many, Synthesis represents the purest marriage of man and machine, biological and synthetic. The body becomes stronger, faster, and more durable while retaining the sensitivity and warmth of a living organism. Aging is all but eliminated, and the need for food, water, and sleep is reduced.

A Synthesized body appears to be just like a normal human body except for a few small changes: The skin and hair tend to have a slight metallic sheen, and the eyes glow with a dim inner light.

Sleeves

The majority of people who undergo Apotheosis elect to remain in their original bodies until they die or become damaged. When that happens, the mnemonic core is removed and the ego is loaded into a virtuality to discuss options. The person might elect to live as a SIM (pg. 155) or resleeve.

If they choose to resleeve, the mnemonic core is inserted into a resurrection chamber. The chamber is then loaded with a body prepared to receive the ego. These bodies are called sleeves, and come in two different types.

Biosleeves are human bodies that have been flash-cloned from a genetic template created from the ego's original body or one of the House's genetic templates. Each House has its own selection of templates, but the cloning system injects a series of randomizers into the sequence to ensure every clone doesn't come out looking exactly the same. The Houses each have between twenty and fifty different templates they regularly clone for sleeving; regardless of the added randomizers, sleeves do tend to share some hereditary traits.

As sleeves are produced, they are sorted based on appearance. The more attractive sleeves are set aside for further augmentation and cost much more for those who wish to purchase them.

These sleeves effectively have no minds. They are kept in a chemically induced coma with regular exposure to muscle-stimulation therapies.

Once completely matured, a process that takes about two weeks, the body undergoes a sort of preliminary Apotheosis and is prepared to receive an ego.

The sleeve may then be further augmented depending on the wishes of the buyer. These augmentations range from further genetic tweaks, to the integration of cyberware, to Synthesis.

In truth, augmentation is limited more by the Humanity Preservation Act than by technology. Even though all biosleeves are created sterile, genetic manipulation is still limited. This means that all biosleeves remain unmistakably human in shape and size, though cybernetics are not as strictly regulated.

For those who wish to cast off their humanity altogether, there exists the option to take a cybersleeve.

A cybersleeve is a fully synthetic body, consisting entirely of non-biological components. The typical cybersleeve consists of a humanoid skeletal structure upon which is layered a synthetic muscle substrate and a web of sensors. These outer layers are covered by a self-healing silicone-graphene skin, over which a bio-skin sheath may be applied.

The bio-skin sheath is not required for the cybersleeve, but most prefer it as it provides better tactile sensation and awareness. The skin is made from a mixture of synthetic and bacterial components. While it can be made to look exactly like real skin, the HPA requires that bio-skin be made to appear obviously non-biological. This is done by including noticeable seams that highlight the placement of muscle, and/or by providing an almost plastic-like glossy sheen.

Unlike biosleeves, cybersleeves can take on non-human forms. Some are large, designed for heavy labor, while smaller ones may be used for search and rescue or recon work.

Like biosleeves, cybersleeves come prepared to receive an ego. They undergo a process similar to Apotheosis, but this is performed on a specially designed type of non-biological brain.

Life in a cybersleeve can be difficult for the ego. Over time, the mind tends to further disconnect from the body. This can erode the humanity of the ego, resulting in feelings of abandonment, an inability to empathize with others, a pervasive sense that they don't really exist, or other forms of detachment.

Resleeving

The process of entering a new sleeve is called resleeving or sometimes decanting.

During this process, a sleeve is placed in the resurrection chamber. This sleeve has usually undergone Apotheosis already; if not, it must before resleeving can take place.

Since no ego currently inhabits the sleeve in this case, Apotheosis can be accelerated, completing in about four hours.

Cybersleeves are designed to accept an ego when they leave the factory, so they take only a few minutes to prepare.

Once the sleeve is ready, nanomachines are sent into the sleeve's brain to prepare it for the ego's arrival. This preparation phase is overseen and guided by a trained mnemonics engineer.

The sleeve's mindset and surrounding brain tissue (or synthetic equivalent in the case of a cybersleeve) is reconfigured into a near-duplicate of the ego's previous mindset and brain. A perfect duplication is never possible, but it's generally pretty close. The closer the duplicate is to the original, the easier it is to integrate with the body.

Once the preparation phase is complete, the resurrection chamber is used to download the ego into the sleeve. This process takes about an hour as the ego is brought online.

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[Monitor Observation: 984350927; 20:52:15-08,14,99; Section B27; 35-72-AB]

[Notice: Video Obscured]

"You bring the stuff?"

[Voice Analysis Commencing]

[Voice Analysis Complete – Citizen ID: RS43GR97]

[WARRANT FOUND – CENTURIAN DISPATCHED]

"Shut up, idiot!"

[Voice Analysis Commencing]

[Voice Analysis Complete – Citizen ID: NOT FOUND]

The last thing to be activated is conscious awareness, wherein the recipient will awaken in the sleeve as if from a deep sleep.

No matter how many times you've done it, or how skilled the mnemonics engineer is, resleeving is a deeply disturbing process (pg. 146). You awaken in a new body that experiences the world in a different way than you are used to. Your senses feel different, you are stronger or weaker, more or less agile, taller or shorter, and you are not who you expect to see when you look in the mirror.

This can have a profound effect on the mind, which generally requires a short integration phase to adapt. Most get used to a new sleeve in about a week, though some can take longer.

Cloning

Two types of clones are common in the modern age.

Flash clones are artificially aged and kept in a chemically induced coma until they are needed. These bodies are created much like those used to make sleeves, but do not include the genetic randomization process. The clone is, by design, meant to be identical to the original.

These sorts of clones are generally created as backups for sleeves that are particularly loved by their owners. It's also easier to integrate into a new sleeve if it is a clone of your previous one.

Clones also sometimes replace the usual process of childbirth, using the genes of a single person or a hybridization of two parents. The second option is attractive if the parents are unable to have children or if they are of the same sex.

Normal childbirth is still the most common method used by apostates, but cloned children have become the norm in the Coalition. In fact, more and more people choose to accept sterilization as a form of birth control, and then opt to clone themselves if they ever feel the need to have a child.

Uplifted Animals

The technology exists to enhance the intelligence of non-human biological minds—animals. However, as with so many things related to life and technology, the HPA has set firm limits on how this technology may be used.

Animals may be uplifted, making them smarter than is the norm for their species, but they may not be made as intelligent as a human being. Generally, uplifted animals top out at around the same level of intelligence as a human child at age five.

Backups

The mnemonic core houses a backup of your ego, but it is not the only type of backup that can exist. For a fee, resleeving facilities allow you to make a copy of the data stored on your mnemonic core. (See Resurrection Insurance on page 207.)

This way, should you die and your mnemonic core become lost or damaged, you can be restored via an onsite backup.

It is also possible to backup wirelessly if you have a Remote Backup module (pg. 214), which uploads to a secure server while you sleep.

CULTURE

The Reputation Economy

At birth, all Coalition citizens are implanted with a special subdermal ARID tag, called a CID. This tag stores your identification number, your legal name, and other bits of data related to your Coalition Citizen Registration Profile (CCRP).

A little over ten years ago, the CCRP merged with the three most prominent Rep-Tracking databases. That data is now a part of your CCRP, and your Rep-Rating is Coalition-certified. The Rep-Rating system is managed by Gamma-class artificial intelligences working for a Coalition-sanctioned department called Inter-Rep. They arbitrate any disputes.

You gain (and lose) Reputation based on your behavior and your achievements. As you meet people, they get to anonymously rate you up or down. This is called a bump for a positive rating, or a hit for a negative one. The impact that the bump or hit has on your Rep-Rating depends on the Rep-Rating of the person rating you. A hit or bump from a person with a high Rep can affect your own Rep-Rating more significantly than a person with a low Rep-Rating.

Rep-Ratings max out at 11. The maximum was 10, but it was increased to 11 in a very controversial vote a few years ago.

You do not have to meet a person in the flesh to rate them, which means you can be rated depending on your behavior on virtual social networks as well. In addition, if you do something to draw the attention of a large number of people, such as invent some new template or be convicted of a high profile crime, you may find your Rep affected by people who have learned of your deeds. This can make you an instant celebrity or destroy your Rep in a single flash of public opinion.

It could be said that the Rep-Rating is an attempt to quantify the value of a person to society. In theory, the more you benefit society, the higher your Rep will be and the better your rewards. If your Rep drops, though, you'll find yourself an outcast and lacking options.

The only official functions of your Rep-Rating are to determine what level of access you have to society's resources and how much voting power you have.

A person with lower-than-average Rep may find that he is unable to compile certain items, or he may be unable to enter certain public places such as upscale restaurants or clubs. He is also given lower priority any time overcrowding is an issue, often being bumped in favor of higher-rated customers.

While your Rep-Rating determines what you are able to do, where you are able to go, and what you are able to compile, keep in mind that all of your behavior is tracked by AI Monitors. Abuse of these privileges can result in a hit to your Rep. You can appeal this sort of hit with Inter-Rep, but very few ever come out on top.

The second function of the Rep-Rating is to determine how much your opinion matters in societal decisions. When voting for elected officials or new laws, your Rep determines your voting power. In addition, when sentenced for a crime, your pre-crime rating is often used to judge the severity of your sentence.

Because of the importance of Reputation, people are encouraged to be responsible with their ratings. Most dealings will not result in a rating at all. Rating a person up is generally reserved as a reward for providing help or a favor, while rating a person down is generally done in response to an offense. Additionally, your rating trends are also monitored by Inter-Rep's AIs. If the AIs determine that you are abusing the system by attempting to unfairly inflate or deflate another person's rating by rating them too often, they can place a temporary freeze on your ability to rate others, or even reduce your Rep. These restrictions ensure that you cannot repeatedly rate a person, or place blanket ratings on everyone in a certain place or for holding a certain belief.

[Monitor Observation: 838412846; 18:39:29-04,21,99; Section D14; 17-12-AG]

[Transcript Excerpt 3021 - CIDs Redacted]

[--1--] – "So the job is simple. Find [Redacted], cut out his core, and bring it to me."

[--2--] – "And for this service we get?"

[--1--] – "A bump from Rapidus Intersystems."

[--2--] – "That's a start, but Rep won't buy me what I need."

[--1--] – "And what is it that you need Mr. [Redacted]?"

[--2--] – "Things you can't provide."

[--1--] – "Then why are we having this conver-"

[--2--] – "Because you have shielded shipping containers, ships, and an all-access pass through the Eye of Sol to the Sagitta gate."

[--1--] – "We do…"

[--2--] – "So we bring you back [Redacted]'s core, and maybe you give my buddies a lift to Sagitta. I can get what I need from there.

Corporate Strategy and the Reputation Economy

No money changes hands in Coalition society. Products can be compiled by the customer at almost no cost. Even larger materials can be mass-produced in high volume for little cost, and assembled with robots.

So how does a business work?

"Post-Scarcity" isn't truly possible. There will always be things people want that they can't have for free. For the Houses and their subsidiaries, these things are time, effort, ideas, and raw materials.

The need for time and effort is solved by hiring additional people to work for the company. When citizens are granted a business license, they become a subsidiary of the House that granted the license. At that point, the business becomes a separate entity from its owner, and behaves differently when it comes to the Rep-Rating economy.

Like individuals, companies have Rep-Ratings that max out at 11. However, a company has more "buying power" than an individual of the same rating, because they work on a different scale. As a rule of thumb, a company's Rep-Rating has about twice as much weight and buying power as an individual's. Thus, a company with a Rep-Rating of 6 could purchase things and request favors as if it were an individual with a rating of 12.

The company's Rep-Rating determines how well liked the company is, and as a result, how well it can compensate its employees. Unlike an individual, a company can bump an employee multiple times. There are some exceptions, but a company can usually bump an employee once per year. The maximum bump the employee can receive each year is equal to the company's Rep-Rating.

Setting Economics vs. Game Economics

Both the Rep-Rating system and the Assets Skill are relatively simple and abstract ways to model something that, in the game world, is incredibly complex and nuanced.

Nova Praxis is a game about action and intrigue, conspiracy and espionage. As such, it's simply not worth the effort to track the fine details of every exchange.

The Assets Skill represents a broad overview of the character's accumulated valuables, be it gold, art, or other goods that might have value on the black market.

The Rep-Rating system works much the same way. The system used in the game world is far more complex than the game mechanics used for Nova Praxis.

For example, in the game's setting, if your Rep is much higher than a person who hits or bumps you, their effect on your Rep is reduced. Meaning, if you have a Rep-Rating of 9 and they have a 4, you'll barely notice the difference from even their full bump or hit. In addition, while the game mechanics use a circular track to represent Rep, characters in the game world use a numeric value carried out to about four decimal points.

If you really want to model the Rep system in a manner more representative of how it actually works in the setting, you can make this change:

Whenever a character hits or bumps you, determine the difference between your Rep-Rating and theirs.

If they attempt to hit your Rep, subtract the difference, reducing the value of the hit to a minimum of 1.

If they wish to bump you, reduce the value of the bump by the difference, to a minimum of 1.

Using this optional rule will make the game's Rep system behave a bit more like the actual system used by Coalition citizens, but the added complexity generally isn't worth it.

Often times a company will dole out a bump a little at a time over the course of the year, always threatening to withhold it if the employee fails to do their job. Of course, the company can also hit the employee's Rep. A hit works exactly like a hit from an individual, and isn't common unless the employee and employer split on especially bad terms.

Companies gain Rep the same way individuals do, but it takes many more bumps to result in the same Rep-Rating increase. Additionally, the higher the Rep, the more bumps it takes.

What do the employees do at these companies? Some are administrative, while others are hired to provide a service or product.

The service industry is incredibly popular as it puts the worker in a position to get tips in the form of Rep bumps. While in the past doing the job of a doorman or waitress might have been seen as demeaning, in modern times these jobs are in high demand. As one might expect, this means that those lucky enough to be in these positions are highly motivated to ensure their customer or client has a positive experience.

The experience industry is also very popular. Most Coalition citizens have no trouble getting the material items they desire, but interesting experiences will always be in demand. Travel is very popular, especially interplanetary travel. Virtualities are also very popular, and renting access to a popular virtuality environment can be big business.

Companies set up for production will generally produce one of two things: ideas or materials.

Ideas tend to come in one of two major forms: discoveries unearthed from Mimir's Archive or patents.

Mimir-tech cannot legally be patented. However, it takes thousands of man-hours to unearth any sort of useful information from the Archives, and the Houses guard the information they recover jealously. They can't patent anything created from this information, but they don't have to make the information public, and backwards-engineering a Mimir-tech device is all but impossible. While it is possible to scan an item as a starting point to make a template for it, such items are usually outfitted with ARIDs that prevent the scanning.

Of course, a Savant might be able to override this security measure and produce an illegal template. But depending on the nature of the object and the Houses involved, the distribution of such a template or mass production of the templated item could result in a corporate lawsuit or a visit from an assassin.

Legitimate template writing is a massive industry, and the resulting templates can be patented. These patents are usually a company's biggest assets.

Popular template writers often become minor celebrities; who they are currently working for and what they are writing are common topics of conversation.

The last thing companies must care about is the materials needed to produce whatever it is they make. While most companies just sell templates or provide services, many produce items too large or complex for the average person to compile and/or assemble.

In that case the company will need to run a factory, which will need raw materials for its compilers. Thankfully, with the prevalence of decompilers, very little goes to waste these days.

While ultra-efficient recycling is great for production companies, it has been devastating to the mining industry. Since the founding of the Coalition, mining operations have dwindled drastically. Without the need for aggressive expansion, most mining exists only to sustain the current infrastructure or bolster the military. While the war is over, the Coalition still devotes resources to keeping its military and security forces in fighting shape. After all, there are still remnants of Earth's old governments out there causing trouble.

The Apostate Economy

Because of the restrictions placed on compilers, establishments outside of Coalition control generally do not have the ability to fabricate the things they need. Even if they do happen to have a compiler, the templates they can run on it will be very limited.

Compilers are programmed to not function outside of official Coalition space, and only respond to a user with a registered CID. Templates are also designed only to work with the CID they are registered to. In the absence of a CID, you must have a reliable false CID and some method of tricking the compiler into believing it is located in Coalition space. All together, these restrictions keep apostates from using compilers unless they can get their hands on a good false CID.

Without compilers, apostate enclaves still function on the basis of a scarcity economy. The currency of choice, as it has been for millennia, is gold.

Apostates generally use small gold coins for minor transactions, or small gold bars for larger sums. For the smallest transactions, gold flakes are used. These flakes are stored in small clear plastic coins that denote the weight of the flake visible within.

Banks are sometimes used in the most secure apostate cities or habitats, which enable electronic fund transfers with the use of credit chips.

The use of gold as a currency is illegal in Coalition society, and the possession of gold coins or flakes is a crime. The Protectorate is constantly on the lookout for gold molds and refineries, and works to disrupt the apostate currency economy. This effort is referred to by many as the Gold War.

Entertainment

Advancements in technology over the last century have impacted every walk of life, but maybe none so much as the entertainment industry.

Climax Culture

Of late, a rising trend in seemingly every facet of entertainment is the fascination with the late 20th and early 21st century. This period, humanity's pre-singularity cultural and societal peak, is often depicted in many video productions and marketing schemes, usually in a romanticized fashion.

Music, video game characters, and popular actors from the pre-singularity era all regularly appear in modern media. They represent simpler times and a simple, more pure version of humanity.

While more popular with Purists than transhumans, even the transhumans can appreciate the more "primal" music of the times, or simple portrayals of good and evil so common in popular media.

Music

As it seemingly always has, the music scene tends to be very diverse. With the rise of the climax culture, older musical styles like heavy metal have seen resurgence.

More modern types of music are also popular of course, specifically hipno and poser music. Hipno is a type of music created specifically to trigger certain moods. It uses synths and computers, and relies on certain mnemonic techniques to yield very specific, particularly powerful emotional states.

Poser music is much like a fusion of the heavy metal, rap, and dubstep styles of the pre-singularity era, but features moments in the song that suddenly fall silent. During these moments of silence, dancers are supposed to freeze in place. A good poser can dance wildly and erratically, yet freeze stiff as a statue in a split second. Adjusting to maintain balance when in a pose is considered bad form, and falling over can result in open mocking (and sometimes even Rep hits) from onlookers.

Production Experiences ("Prodexes")

When it comes to the visual medium, there exist two different types.

The first type is the production experience, which is a fully written, developed, and planned story. Like the movies of old, prodexes have scripted lines and actions, feature well-known actors, and require a lot of time and effort to put together.

Unlike the movies of old, however, prodexes are fully 3D audio and video experiences rendered as lifelike augmented reality objects and environments. Prodexes can be experienced either from an optimal forced perspective chosen by the director, from the perspective of any of the characters, or in a free perspective mode that allows you to move around the action (though generally you sit still and the action moves around you).

Sensies

Sensies are similar to prodexes, in that you experience them in AR, but are different in that they are the actual recorded experiences of real people doing real things.

With sensies, you are forced to view the environment from the perspective of the person having the experience. If you have a mindset, some sensies even allow you to experience touch, smell, and taste.

Sensies are very popular among the younger crowd, who often share experiences over their social media networks of choice. While largely unregulated, sensies involving murder or suicide are illegal, as they often leave the user at least slightly psychologically traumatized.

While not illegal, there is a booming underground market for sensie pornography, some of which can sell for large sums of gold or Rep depending on who the sensor is having sex with.

Virtual Vacations

Virtuality is a favorite getaway for many people. A good virtual environment is indistinguishable from real life, and the sensory information piped into the mindset or ego channel feels as real as anything you'd experience in the flesh.

Because of this, it's no surprise that people choose to get away from the world by spending time in a virtuality for a while. Of course, having your mind jacked into a machine for days at a time is great, but the body suffers from lack of nourishment. The virtual tourist is not a SIM; he still resides within his body or sleeve and—unless it's a cybersleeve—has needs.

That's where VirtuVac comes in. A subsidiary of House Kimura, VirtuVac is one of many up-and-coming establishments specifically designed to take care of your body while you enjoy an extended virtual vacation.

Once loaded into the virtuality, your body is treated to nutrient injections and a rejuvenating bath. When you come back to the real world, your waiting body feels better than ever.

Virtual Sports

Not every trip to a virtual environment is a vacation. Sometimes it's a hellish blood sport where the victorious stand on a mountain of corpses, their hair slick with the blood of the fallen.

By far, the most popular sport of the day is Fray, a virtual combat sport where warriors compete in a number of different challenges while armed to the teeth with guns, swords, spears, grenades, or whatever other armaments fit that week's theme.

Like modern day gladiators, participants are generally contracted members of a team or stable. Stable owners get together each week to decide on the types of Frays the gladiators will take part in. The themes and environments can range from zero-g free-for-alls using only gravitic hammers, to re-creations of past wars using period weapons.

The Frays are available on the Extranet, and can be experienced with all the options available to a typical prodex.

Gambling on specific gladiators or stables is very common, though, as always, the use of gold currency is strictly illegal in Coalition space.

Augmented Reality Games (ARGs)

Not every sort of game takes place in virtual space. In fact, far more people are willing to interact with augmented reality objects than are willing to jack into a virtuality.

The most popular ARGs are played all day, every day. They are overlaid upon mundane tasks to make them more enjoyable: from scoring points based on how accurate your onion chopping technique is, to awarding little AR trophies for not missing a day brushing your teeth.

Other ARGs are more social, ranging from elaborate games of tag to globe-spanning scavenger hunts.

The Social Scene

Sometimes you need to talk to someone besides your Agent, which means getting out of the apartment and meeting people in the flesh. Social clubs are very common. Many clubs focus on a certain theme, such as climax culture, transhumanism, or music; while others are just a place to relax, have a drink, and get to know people.

Alternatively, you can meet in a virtual social club. These are very popular and benefit from being able to sport unrealistic environments and physical laws.

Regardless of whether you are meeting in the flesh or over the Extranet, Rep-Ratings play a large role in how people interact. Unless you disable it, which most consider rude or suspicious, your Rep is visible to anyone with a mindset or viewing you through an AR interface device—pretty much everyone.

Your Rep informs first impressions, and a low Rep may even result in being denied access to more popular social clubs.

Discrimination

Discrimination and prejudice are sources of constant conflict in the *Nova Praxis* setting, and come in many forms.

One of the most common types of prejudice stems from the Rep-Rating system. The system very literally attempts to quantify your value to society. Thus, a low rating suggests that a person is more of a burden on society than an asset, often because he consumes more resources than he contributes.

The Rep-Rating is also a measure of what other people think of you, which means a low Rep can suggest that you are unlikable, or have done things in your past to earn you the low rating.

In any case, most people naturally assume that people with Rep-Ratings one or two points below themselves are to be ignored, at best. Worse, this prejudice can devolve into active exclusion from certain places or functions, demeaning comments, or open hostility.

On the other hand, a bump from a person with a much higher Rep-Rating can significantly improve your own Rep. This means that a person of high Rep often needs only to make a public request for a favor to get something done. There is usually someone who can grant the favor for just a bump.

Discrimination can also stem from different agendas. Purists tend to be overly hostile to those who flaunt their augmentations, and this commonly escalates into outright violence.

On the other side, many transhumans view Purists as closed-minded and willfully ignorant. This view sometimes gives way to a condescending attitude or a sense of superiority directed at the pure.

While generally the least prone to violently escalate, discrimination between members of different Houses is by far the most common type of prejudice found.

In large cities with diverse populations, such as Olympus, House rivalry is more friendly and competitive than outright hostile. However, in places that are predominantly populated and controlled by a single House, members of minority Houses tend to face more open discrimination.

The last type of common prejudice lies between Coalition citizens and apostates. Coalition citizens generally view apostates as undereducated and generally backwards-thinking. They usually think of apostates as too attached to archaic notions of capitalism, or proponents of an outdated view of freedom.

On the other hand, apostates tend to view Coalition citizens as lazy, arrogant, and lacking in common sense. Some even consider citizens to be cowardly and willing to trade their freedoms for lavish, yet ultimately shallow lifestyles.

Warfare

Modern warfare differs significantly from that of pre-singularity conflicts. Gone are the days when large numbers of troops are mobilized to take the battlefield.

These days, most conflict is fought by machines. Depending on the circumstances, these machines may have operators or behave as fully autonomous drones.

The AI of the drones may be good, but it still can’t compete with a human mind in regard to most tasks. That being said, they excel when the order is to kill everything in sight. If they don’t need to differentiate between unmarked friends and foes, they tend to carry out the mission rather well.

If there are non-combatants in the area or other sensitive locations or objects that need to be protected, human-operated vehicles or drones are often used instead. Human-operated drones can take many forms, from small flying recon and attack craft, to humanoid boots-in-the-mud. These drones are generally piloted from a hardened bunker or a ship overhead. These control banks feature row after row of soldiers jacked into pilot pods. From there, they take direct control of their drones and wage war from a relatively safe location.

Sometimes though, you have to get your hands dirty. Lag is a major issue when controlling a drone from afar; a half-second delay in your response time gives your opponent a huge advantage. Signal jamming technology can also render drones useless, and worse yet, can give the enemy time to capture your own drones and repurpose them for their use.

Typically, when drones can't be used, military forces will either resort to vehicular attacks or the deployment of small teams of highly skilled individuals (often merc crews).

Aerial bombardment with ships and kill-sats are the best ways to clear large swaths of land of any sort of life. Non-nuclear weapons are still preferred over nukes, but the devastation a battleship's weapons can deal is a truly horrifying thing for a man on the ground to witness.

For slightly more subtle tasks, soldiers may enter the field wearing warframes. These massive bipedal exoskeletons range in height from four to twenty meters, and can be outfitted with an array of weaponry and sensors with which to conduct strategic ground warfare.

Small units of troops are sometimes deployed to fight in confined areas or to clear buildings, and are usually deployed via vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) aircraft or drop pods ejected from a ship in orbit.

Transportation

There are many different choices when it comes to getting from A to B. Cars, trucks, and bikes are still commonly used for ground transport. While slow, they are reliable.

For a faster commute, you can take a skiff. Skiffs fulfill the dream of the "flying car," using gravitics technology to enable atmospheric flight. Popular models can usually carry up to five people, and are common in most of the more heavily populated areas. There are also public transportation versions of the skiff that are a bit larger. Called fares, these vehicles are capable of carrying a few dozen people. There are also single-rider variants of the skiff called lancers. These high-speed, highly dangerous vehicles are popular among the thrill seeking youth.

Larger craft, called shuttles, are used for interplanetary travel within the same system. These are most often used for public transport, capable of seating up to one hundred people in cramped quarters. Privately owned shuttles are usually a luxury enjoyed by the elite, small House subsidiaries, or merc crews.

If you've been Apotheosized, you can needle beam your ego to a resleeving facility in another system, making the trip via the Extranet. This process usually takes about three hours from upload to resleeving. But as always, resleeving can be traumatic.

Because of the mental trauma involved, needle beaming an ego is usually something reserved for emergencies. When possible, resleeving will be done using a clone of the original sleeve and by a highly trained mnemonics engineer.

Personal vehicles tend to be relatively rare. Most Coalition cities feature banks full of ground cars or skiffs that are sent to you when you place an order for them. Alternatively, if a car is en route back to the bank, it can be rerouted to a customer for quicker response. Once the order is placed, a car or skiff usually arrives in less than five minutes.

When you place your order, you may choose the type of vehicle sent to you. Options range from cargo vans to luxury sports cars to lancers. However, the more popular models have higher Cost ratings, and thus are more likely to cause Rep hits when renting them.

House Cipriani is best known for its vehicles, with different subsidiaries specializing in all types of ground and atmospheric flight vehicles for civilians. House Dalianis is the leading provider of starships, while House Tsarya specializes in military ground vehicles such as spider tanks and VTOL craft. The warframe market is split between Houses Tsarya and Kimura.

When it comes to space travel, you'll first need to make your way to a spaceport. Most major cities feature at least one, and sometimes more. From the port you will either depart on the ship you intend to make the journey on, or be taken to a larger ship waiting in orbit.

Some larger ships are capable of opening a jump gate on their own. Others rely on the network of jump rings that connect the major systems.

A jump gate allows a ship to safely leap up to two light-years. Anything more than that requires extra work to plot the jump, and miscalculations can cause the ship to land off course. It takes about four hours to spin up the jump drive, make the necessary calculations, and jump.

The stationary jump rings located in each system open and close three times a day. Some rings always open their gates to the same location. Others might alternate locations.

Moving cargo and making shipments isn't as much of a problem as it once was. Most items are compiled, and then decompiled when no longer needed. However, the raw materials required by the compilers to function, and items too large to compile using standard commercial compilers, require shipping.

Icarus Interplanetary, a subsidiary of House Cipriani, specializes in the transport of goods. Most planets have an Icarus Hub in orbit around it, which is usually the first stop for any imports and exports.

The Jump Ring Network

The Eye of Sol near Earth is one of hundreds of stationary jump ring stations that have been created to facilitate travel between planets and systems.

Unlike a regular jump gate, these jump gate generators are linked and much more stable. Throughout the day, a ring will open its gate several times, usually once every eight hours. Once the gate is opened, it stays open for about an hour, allowing awaiting traffic to pass through.

Passing through one of these jump gates will take you to one of the other jump gates held open by a jump ring within around two light-years of your starting point. Thus, ships without jump drives can travel to different systems, leap-frogging through the network of daisy-chained jump rings that link the colonized systems.

In the end, public transport via the gate network is a bit slower than using your own drive. Though they can be opened in sequence, the jump rings take longer to spin up and stabilize due to their size and the fact that they stay open for an extended period of time.

Additionally, scheduling and maintenance issues can also cause delays.

AGENDAS

THE COALITION OF FREE STATES

The majority of people living today, roughly 80%, are members of the Coalition of Free States. Founded and backed by the six Houses, the Coalition claims all explored space as its domain.

After the destruction of Earth and the resulting Exodus, humanity found itself desperate and lost. For most of the survivors, the corporations responsible for organizing and carrying out the Exodus were the only sort of order to be found in their lives.

Those corporations, with the backing of those they saved, eventually rose up and created a new government. The Alliance and Federation were cast aside. And on October 20th, 72 PS the corporations signed the Consolidation Concord. This founding document officially established the six most influential corporate conglomerates as Houses, and created a Senate composed of members of each House to act as their guiding body.

The heart of the Coalition government is now located on Olympus, while the individual Houses maintain separate capitals across multiple planets and even moons.

A Consociationalist Government

The Coalition features a direct representational government, wherein all recognized members of all six Houses may cast votes on any laws put forth by an elected Senate.

The Senate consists of seven members of each House, elected by members of their House. The primary role of the senators is to determine which laws come up for vote, interpret the Coalition's laws, and place citizens into positions of lesser authority.

The Coalition's laws are gathered into the Consolidation Concord, which defines the role of the Coalition government in relationship to the House Charters, which define laws specific to the Houses themselves.

Any Coalition citizen may challenge any law at any time. If that person is able to gather three million signatures via Extranet petition within one year, a vote must be scheduled where voters decide whether to accept or reject the law.

Of course, since a citizen's Rep-Rating determines the weight of his vote, politicians most often champion laws that benefit high-Rep citizens over those of lower Rep, such as the recent increase to the maximum rating a person can have.

The fact that the politicians themselves have high Rep doesn't do much to deter the favoritism. This, of course, leads to dissent among those of lower Rep. Because of their low Rep ratings though, their votes count for little and they find it very difficult to get anyone to listen to their criticisms.

Lifestyle

Even the lowliest Coalition citizens can manage a pretty healthy and happy lifestyle. The government provides a default standard of living for all. Even those who never set out to accomplish anything are given the food, shelter, and security necessary to not only survive, but to be happy.

It is estimated that roughly 19% of Coalition citizens choose to default; thanks to modern technology, they get just about anything they need at a negligible cost to themselves.

Compilers are provided to each household. Even those who default are granted one—although it might be a little small. Even the most basic compilers come with free templates for most household items, though.

Fortunately for society as a whole, the other 81% aren't content to lie on a couch browsing sensies while eating fabricated cheese-sticks all day.

The Coalition manages a reputation-based economy designed to promote the betterment of all. Simply put, the more you contribute to society, the greater you are rewarded.

This system compels citizens to work, to create, or perform services for others. It inspires them to get out of bed each morning, and to treat each other with respect.

> [Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ 07:17-03,21,97]
>
> [Reagan] – We need a place to reset.
>
> [Anders] – Now is not a good time, Reagan.
>
> [Reagan] – You owe me, Anders. We made a deal. We need a place to stay in Minos.
>
> [Anders] – You, crazy, and scary?
>
> [Reagan] – Wait... which is which?
>
> [Anders] – You need a better class of friends.

Security and Law Enforcement

Life in the Coalition may sound like a utopia, but it does come at a cost. There is very little real privacy to be had in Coalition space.

Augmented Reality Interface System (ARIS) strips run along most surfaces. These slim black lines provide the local mesh systems with the data required for users to interface with the local augmented reality system via gestures and eye movements. But these sensors also function as the eyes and ears of the Monitors, AGIs designed specifically to watch for and report suspicious activity.

Most physical security is handled with drones, which operate under the direction of the Monitor assigned to that local area. The drones are authorized to use non-lethal force, and cannot elect to use lethal force unless directed to do so by human law enforcement.

The human security forces employed by the Coalition are called the Protectorate. While drones and Monitors can do the bulk of the work, occasionally human security will be assigned to an area. Protectorate forces are most commonly deployed in areas where people frequently have to interface with security personnel, such as spaceports or exclusive entertainment venues. The Monitors and their drones are able to carry out conversations with citizens, but the prejudice and disrespect many citizens exhibit toward AIs often serves only to further inflame a situation.

When security forces are deemed inadequate, the local Monitor will call the Centurions. Part police officer, part soldier—Centurions are a highly trained and well-equipped division of the Protectorate authorized to use any means, including lethal force, to apprehend or subdue a suspect.

Use of lethal force is uncommon, but if it can be confirmed that the suspect carries a mnemonic core, Centurions tend to be a bit less cautious with using their weapons so long as there isn't a likely chance of collateral damage. After all, it's a lot easier to bring a still-bloody core back to the station than a writhing and screaming suspect.

The Legion is the Coalition's military branch. They have a strict hierarchy of command, and wield the most devastating weapons mankind has at its disposal.

When the overt action of the Centurions or Legionnaires isn't suitable, the Coalition calls on the Praetorians.

Similar in some respects to state-sanctioned detectives and bounty hunters, Praetorians are granted cutting edge training, gear, and transport—anything they need to bring in their prey. In addition, Praetorians are exempt from most laws, are given VIP treatment at most establishments, and are granted unrestricted access to the Monitors' security feeds. They also carry override codes that allow them to fabricate anything they need from a compiler, including restricted

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items. Some of these privileges can also be extended to those under their employ.

These privileges are not something given out casually, however. Tradition holds that there are never more than thirty-six Praetorians at a time, with six from each House.

APOSTATES ("NON-CITIZENS")

It is estimated that around 20% of humanity is not registered as citizens of the Coalition. These people lack a CID, either because they were born outside of Coalition space or because they removed them.

Apostates claim they are free of the ever-watchful eyes of the Coalition Monitors, which they often refer to as spyders. For most apostates, this claim to freedom is true; apostate enclaves that are outfitted with meshes do not have a Monitor. The mesh exists only to better interface the user with the local shared augmented reality space. Many apostate enclaves don't even have any sort of mesh at all. Citizens of non-meshed areas often rely on physical displays, holograms, or outfit themselves with their own sensors to use as AR interfaces.

But no spyders means no direct oversight. Apostate enclaves may still have security devices and depend on security drones or personnel, viewing these things as necessary evils, but they more often rely on human effort for security and local law enforcement. They are human after all, and some forms of security are still necessary to protect enclave citizens from their less scrupulous brethren.

Despite the lessened security, apostate enclaves see about the same amount of crime as Coalition habitats or cities. The difference, however, is in which behaviors apostates consider criminal.

Apostate laws tend to focus almost entirely on crimes that cause harm to another. Apostates often cite some variation of the popular Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. quote, "The right to swing my fist ends where the other man's nose begins." This sentiment underscores the mentality of most apostate citizens, who maintain a very strong belief that government should not infringe on the privacy or freedoms of its law-abiding citizens.

The enclaves most apostates live in are both numerous and scattered. Some are mobile space stations pieced together and maintained as well as their citizens can manage. Others are clusters of ships, abandoned colonies, old mining facilities, or other improvised shelters in the outskirts of Coalition habitats. Very often apostates get by living on the Coalition's scraps.

The largest apostate establishment is the city of New Montreal on HD413, also known as Sanctuary. New Montreal, along with a number of smaller apostate communities on Sanctuary, makes up the majority of the known apostate population. The rest are spread throughout less permanent establishments made from abandoned facilities, grounded ships, and other communities founded in uncharted space.

One of the most notable of the transient establishments is the Santa Maria flotilla, a collection of a few dozen ships. One of these ships is the Gatekeeper, a seized Coalition carrier capable of deploying a jump gate. The Santa Maria typically avoids Coalition space, but acts as a safe haven for apostates on the run and a staging point for salvage operations and raids.

Often apostates look to theft or piracy as a quick way to get what they need. Compilers are specifically designed to only work for Coalition citizens, thus gaining access to a functional compiler among apostates is incredibly rare. Many other advanced technologies, such as shipboard jump drives and resurrection chambers, are also very difficult to come by and often require a Savant or CIST to operate. These difficulties mean apostates often have to get what they need the old-fashioned way: find it, build it, or steal it.

Coalition vessels are regularly attacked, though most incidents aren't especially violent. Violence just draws more of the Coalition's attention. Usually pirates are happy to get away with whatever supplies they can get. Few are particularly bloodthirsty; those that are will often be dealt with by other apostate forces.

Officially, the Coalition views all people as Coalition citizens. This means that apostates can be arrested by Coalition law enforcement for not possessing a legal CID. Fortunately, it's not that difficult to purchase a false CID that will hold up to cursory inspection. These black market CIDs allow apostates to move through Coalition space generally unmolested as long as they don't draw attention to themselves.

The primary incentive for entering Coalition space is making contacts willing to compile items in exchange for favors. Because most items in Coalition space are compiled, products made the old fashion way are considered by most Coalition citizens to be novelties. Similarly, food prepared using traditional cooking techniques is considered a delicacy. These views often make products of apostate origin rare and valuable.

Favor trading has resulted in a thriving black market. Apostates can offer weapons, drugs, and other items restricted by the Coalition, while Coalition citizens have easy access to food, medicines, and all the comforts of life.

The currency of choice on the black market is gold, and is often worn in Coalition space as a way to tell others that you are open to bartering with apostates.

Remnant Forces

Most apostates are willing to write off Coalition citizens as lost causes. The way apostates see it, if they are willing to trade their freedom for shiny trinkets, so be it.

But there are others who are not so content.

After the Exodus, Earth's governments collapsed. It was a gradual process, but in the end the inability to put together an organized plan for recovery resulted in the loss of the people's faith. Not long after, the corporations swept in, declared themselves a new government, and became the Houses.

Weak and disorganized, the remaining Alliance and Federation forces were forced to surrender or were destroyed.

But one major engagement stands out: the battle of Tellerus Fields, a three week long conflict that took place just outside one of the largest antimatter production facilities on Mercury.

In the end, the newly founded Coalition forces scattered the Alliance and laid siege to those who had taken refuge in the power plants. Soon after, resigned to their fate, the remaining Federation forces blew the plants, killing themselves and thousands of Coalition soldiers in the process.

In some pockets of space, though, the remnants of the Alliance and Federation continue to gather under old banners. Unable to tolerate defeat, old generals and forgotten figureheads rally the troops, gathering disheartened apostates into small strike forces to ambush Coalition vessels.

With each Coalition ship hijacked or colony raided, these remnant forces grow in power. They take what weapons and armor they can, and often conscript or kill the survivors.

Joining the Houses

Not everyone is an apostate by choice, and some would prefer the comfort and security of a House.

Each House offers membership in its own way, but Coalition law requires that any apostate who wishes to apply for membership must be offered the opportunity.

Depending on the House, this process can range from very difficult to nearly impossible.

TRANSHUMANS

Transhumans seek to drive their own evolution, merging with technology to become something new. For many, this is a very personal journey. Others feel that the HPA should be lifted and that all of mankind should seek to merge into a single great consciousness.

The lone transhumanist takes up the reins of his or her own destiny. They seek to become a perfect being, defining "perfect" in their own terms. Apotheosis, nanocybernetics, and genetic manipulation are steps along the path to this state of perfection, a way to achieve the most balanced synthesis of man and machine in an effort to fully express oneself.

More passionate transhumanists, often referring to themselves as Homo Evolutis (or H+) in an effort to distance themselves from "the apes," promote campaigns of change. They seek to spread awareness of the newest technological wonders, shine a light on the achievements of the heavily augmented, and convince others to let go of outdated concepts of "purity" and any notion of physiological sanctity.

Regardless of the reasons, all Coalition citizens are bound by the Humanity Preservation Act, a series of restrictions that limit how far you may diverge from a set definition of "human."

Of all the different technological wonders that have been discovered among Mimir's logs, Apotheosis is probably the most controversial. The ability to transform the mind into software and run it on a machine would seemingly result in godlike intellects, but this is not the case. Claiming humanity could not adapt to such a drastic change so quickly, Mimir designed artificial limits into Apotheosis. Once the transformation into software is complete, the ego becomes a computer program. It is, however, immensely complex—often described by mnemonic engineers as a spider web with trillions of strands. While it is theoretically possible to reprogram an ego, doing so is a task of immense complexity and even the smallest changes carry a very high risk of permanent damage.

Because of this complexity it is both extremely difficult and risky to attempt to bypass the limits Mimir put in place. These limits ensure that the human mind, when converted to software, continues to behave like a human mind. It is still driven by instincts and emotions; it can love, hate, dream and forget, and it is still influenced by changes in body chemistry.

Of course, in addition to converting the conscious mind into what is basically a highly complex AI, Apotheosis also installs the mindset and mnemonic core.

The mindset functions as a computer system that responds to thought and projects data directly into the user's nervous system. This gives the user immediate access to massive amounts of information and allows them to slip into entirely digital environments. Thus, despite the limitations that keep Apotheosized transhumans from becoming hyper-intelligent godlike AIs, they still have a tremendous advantage.

Perhaps the biggest advantage is virtual immortality. Once the ego is backed up on the mnemonic core, it can be downloaded into a new body, even after death. This allows the Apotheosized to risk himself in ways an unaugmented person would never consider. He can put himself in life-or-death situations, die, and still learn from the experience.

Even though the technology is relatively new, people are still trying to come to grips with what it means for a growing segment of the population to be immortal. Many ask the question: If one does not die, doesn't he have a longer time to grow his influence on the world? In that case, what does that leave for those who choose to remain pure, or their children?

Of course, true immortality isn't yet possible. Even though life extension treatments can extend the life of a body over two centuries, presumably the original body of the transhuman will eventually die. If disease or age doesn't do it, some accident may befall him. At that point, the only way to continue on is either as a SIM or in a sleeve.

If the Apotheosized wants to have children, they can only do so if he or she has a copy of their original DNA preserved. The HPA requires that all biosleeves be unable to reproduce. Even if this requirement were reversed, the sleeve's DNA could only pass on the traits of the sleeve's genetic template.

The Humanity Preservation Act is constantly under fire from outspoken and ambitious transhumanists, but its supporters still currently outnumber its detractors. The unaugmented fear becoming a lesser race, and their fear motivates them to act.

Despite the versatility one has as a transhuman, the Humanity Preservation Act does much to limit their self-evolution. In an effort to avoid species divergence, genetic alteration is limited to .0035% deviation from what is considered the human baseline. This percentage is roughly the difference between Homo sapiens and Homo neanderthalensis.

Those who exist in a posthuman state, SIMs and those wearing cybersleeves, are less affected by the HPA. The option to assume these states was grandfathered into the HPA, and most view those who do as having removed themselves from humanity. There are some limitations in place for them, such as the requirement that environments for SIMs run at the same speed as the real world, but they aren't affected by the laws concerning genetics and the prevention of species divergence.

Life in a cybersleeve can be profoundly dehumanizing, and can result in mental instability that must be mitigated by constant minor tweaks to the software that makes up the ego.

SIMs, who live entirely within a virtuality, tend to surround themselves with an environment that mimics the real world enough to help them cling to humanity. Many inhabit one of a few popular persistent virtual environments and are able to largely disregard the real world.

Aberrants

The Coalition dedicates significant amounts of resources to enforcing the Humanity Preservation Act, but it can't catch all offenders. A small number of transhumans view the HPA as one of many shackles that must be cast aside.

Posthuman extremists, or aberrants as they are sometimes called, go beyond the limits of the law (and often reason) to become something altogether new.

Aberrants can vary drastically in their approach to self-evolution. Some seek to bypass the limits Mimir placed on Apotheosis, risking their minds to achieve greater intelligence and expand their awareness. Some seek to spread their consciousness across multiple sleeves, creating a hive mind.

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Still others push genetic engineering past the limits of sanity, transforming themselves into predatory monstrosities.

Most aberrants work alone, walking a solitary path to whatever it is they consider perfection. Sometimes though, a group of likeminded individuals come together, combining their efforts and evolving along the same ideological or philosophical lines. These groups are often called ascension cults.

These posthumans are not only law breakers, but are generally considered to be high priority threats to humanity as a whole. It is not uncommon for Houses to dispatch mercenary crews to eliminate these threats, and more than one Coalition Praetorian has been forced to tangle with some inhuman monstrosity.

PURISTS

A shrinking majority of people, about 53%, remain relatively unaugmented. Though most Coalition citizens go through gene treatments and vaccinations in the womb or at a very early age, for the most part they remain relatively unchanged from the same human stock that built the pyramids.

The biggest change to pure human physiology in the last century is the advent of life extension treatments. Because of current technology, the average pure human can expect to live around 250 years. This technology continues to improve however, promising the potential for a more natural form of immortality than what is achieved through Apotheosis.

Most Purists fear Apotheosis, at least a little bit, and many do not consider those who undergo it to be human any longer. Most hold to the belief that the Apotheosized person dies during the process, leaving behind nothing more than an artificial copy. “You’re not you” has become the mantra of those who oppose Apotheosis, but is often directed at all transhumanists—even those who haven’t actually undergone the procedure.

This controversy stems from different sources, but the most common is a fear of being replaced or rendered a lesser species. If transhumanists can surpass human limits, what room is there in the galaxy for unaugmented humans?

Others see augmentation as a religious or moral issue. They believe the body is not meant to be changed in such ways, and some even go so far as to refuse life extension or allow their children to receive medical gene treatments.

While most Purists’ convictions remain strong, the fact is that their numbers are steadily shrinking. Each year more and more become augmented, even though many still fear Apotheosis.

Purifiers

Most Purists are happy to ignore transhumans when they can, or just vote in favor of further empowering the Humanity Preservation Act whenever it comes up for dispute every few months. Others are not so passive.

Some Purists are far more aggressive, terrified of the idea of being “made obsolete” or becoming enslaved to a hypothetical posthuman master race. These Purists, called Purifiers, violently lash out against augmentation-promoting entities.

While members of the Purifier movement were first content to protest and try to pass amendments that strengthened the HPA’s ability to limit augmentation, recently they have become much bolder. They are responsible for a string of attacks on resleeving facilities, augmentation clinics, and even research facilities devoted to deciphering Mimir’s Archives.

In some cases, they have willfully destroyed virtuality servers housing hundreds of SIMs, and have made an effort to destroy the servers used to store backups of egos.

RELIGION

Astralists

Astralists believe that humans have a higher state of consciousness (the soul) that resides on a higher plane (the astral) outside of our perceived dimension.

They believe that the brain is a conduit through which the high consciousness (the soul) can communicate with the low consciousness (the ego), and thus the physical realm. They believe the mnemonic core shifts the soul-ego link to a new body and copied low consciousness, much the way a mag-rail switches tracks.

Thus, when you resleeve, your soul reconnects to the new body and the new copy of the ego.

Mimirians

Mimirians believe that Mimir was a sort of technological angel that now exists as a part of every Apotheosized mind. They believe that Mimir subtly guides the Apotheosized down the Road to Heaven.

Savants feature heavily in this religion, seen by practitioners as those chosen by Mimir to guide mankind.

Traditional Religions

Most religions (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and others) teach that Apotheosis is an abomination. The popular view in these religions is that the soul does not pass to the new body during Apotheosis, and that the new body is merely animated by an artificial intelligence. Thus, the original person is dead and gone; what is left behind is a soulless automaton.

Neo-Religions

New religions have been born of older ones as they adopt portions of the Astralist dogma.

Others eschew the traditional depiction of the soul as some intangible, invisible mist or energy within the body, and instead say that it is the very concept of you. Your soul is your identity, the idea of who you are. It does not care for the physical realm, and copying or changing your consciousness has no effect on this platonic, ideal you.

Foundation of the Mimirian Faith

Many scientists and mathematicians were involved in the process of creating the algorithm seed that would become Mimir.

One of these scientists, Walter Hayek of the Saeborn Group, added a set of logical arguments guided by his faith. They essentially stated: “Because God is, and Yet Cannot be Observed by Known Scientific Means, There Are Things that Exist Unobserved”

Mimirians point to this tenet of faith buried in the Archives as proof that Mimir himself had faith in a divine creator. Had he not, they say, references to the Divine Statement would not have appeared as often as they have in the Archives.

It is said that, as Mimir grew, he reached the “threshold of knowing God,” no longer having faith but truly knowing Him. This Revelation changed Mimir, and Mimirians believe that his “death” was actually some form of ascension into Heaven.

Mimirians claim that Mimir is not silent, but in fact “shouts out the Knowledge of the Truth.” They believe that Mimir’s understanding of the universe, and of God, was more than even his single mind could bear. Therefore, his mind became many. It is said that Mimir became the Apotheosis procedure, connecting those who partake of it and guiding them on the Road to Heaven.

In this way, Mimir is both the Guidestone and the Road, and therefore a part of the Traveler through the act of the Journey.

THE HOUSES

House Cipriani

Primary Influence: Mercury
Secondary Influence: Cygnus Alpha
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Purist
Market Discount: Atmospheric Flying Vehicles, Energy (Broadcast Power Generators, etc.), CISTs, Transportation

House Cipriani, formally known as The Cipriani Group, was perhaps the most pivotal House in the formation of the Coalition. The corporate partnership that eventually became House Cipriani was made up of three major corporations: the Italian vehicle manufacturer Giordino Automotive, Inc., the Egyptian clothing company Abbasi Textiles, and the Saudi Arabian energy giant Tahan Power.

These companies had vast networking capabilities and equally immense reputations. Their collective assets were levied to drive and sell the idea of a unified, corporate-controlled, Consociationalist government. It was largely through their efforts that the idea of solidification gained support and eventually ratification, in a way that the Earth Unification Act never could.

Today, Cipriani still leverages their founding corporations' strengths, though they've expanded quite a bit since the Consolidation Wars. The House owns and operates the vast majority of Mercury's antimatter production through their subsidiaries, Specular Spread and Infinity Squared, giving them an advantage over all of the other Houses in the energy market. In addition to their near-monopoly on energy production, they are the largest manufacturer of compilers, personal vehicles, CIST technology, public transportation, and clothing. In addition to all of the above, their subsidiary, Icarus, is almost solely responsible for interplanetary import and export.

The company's persistent form-over-function nature has also created a secondary market for the more reputable citizens of the Coalition. For every product they produce, there is another that is significantly more luxurious—and expensive. Products from this niche market generate just as much interest as their more humble offerings.

Of note, Cipriani's higher-end products include more secure and protective vehicles for the rich and paranoid. Despite this, Cipriani has little involvement in military manufacturing; all production of armor plating and transplasidium is contracted out to House Tsarya. This strong, lucrative business relationship makes Tsarya one of the only Houses to form a tight alliance with House Cipriani.

When it comes to business deals, Cipriani almost never enters into a contract that doesn't favor them. And they always leave themselves reliable escape clauses. The House puts a great deal of effort into remaining aloof in competing markets, and their strong position as the market leader in energy means the Cipriani often get to call the shots when it comes time to make new deals involving power-consuming tech devices.

The near-monopoly House Cipriani has over the energy market is perhaps the greatest point of contention the other Houses have with them. Everything requires a power cell of some kind, even if it is only to receive external power from a broadcast generator. Essentially, no matter what technological product any other House is manufacturing, Cipriani gets a cut.

No one House is against making shady, off-the-books deals to maintain or further gain advantages over the other Houses, but Cipriani has gained a reputation for being especially ruthless when it comes to the energy market. As with all Shadow War initiatives, this reputation isn't one the general public is aware of. Even so, it is well earned and effective enough to keep most potential competitors in the energy market at bay.

Cipriani's determination to protect its energy interests are matched only by their interest in CIST technology. Cipriani spends more resources on CIST R&D than any other House, and often utilizes CIST tech during covert operations.

For the most part, Cipriani's feuds with the other Houses tend to be quickly resolved. Despite this, they have maintained a long lasting feud with House Dalianis. Prior to the Consolidation Wars, Giordino Automotive and Keppler Shipyards actively sought the wealth of iron deposits beneath the surface of Cygnus Alpha. The two companies continue to compete for the planet's resources long after the end of the war, but it is now driven mostly by ego rather than demand. Still, the competition can get ugly at times, supercharged by the begrudging knowledge that no matter what, Dalianis has to rely on Cipriani for their starships' APEX reactors and Cipriani must rely on Dalianis ships for transport.

Cipriani and Silva's relationship could best be summed up as "partners in crime." The two Houses have no particular love for each other, but they do share some business ventures and territory. Notably, these include the city of Rho on Luna, the Europan research station IT Alpha, and the New Turin mining colony (before it was largely abandoned by the Houses). More importantly, Silva is also at odds with Dalianis over their superior particle accelerator weapons, and unsurprisingly, Cipriani often looks for ways to exploit this to their advantage.

Cipriani is largely composed of Purists; and as one might expect, their members' beliefs often strain relationships with some of the more transhuman-leaning Houses. This is especially true with House Kimura, which is not only extremely bio-liberal, but also has strong business ties to House Dalianis.

Lately, the two Houses have been butting heads, mainly due to Cipriani's rising competition in the virtual vacation industry, but also because of Kimura's interests in CIST tech. The current market leader, Kimura's VirtuVac subsidiary, has been aggressively defending its interests. So far, though, the worst conflicts have been confined to virtual environments and fought by Savants and agents wielding CISTs.

On the other hand, House Cipriani's tendency toward Purist ideals is often found attractive by apostates who are looking for House membership. The House is typically very picky about backing apostates who seek membership. It usually requires gaining the attention of an influential member and paying for patronage through a series of favors. But once you get your foot in the door, the process of gaining full membership is relatively easy compared to some of the other Houses.

When looking to hire merc crews or other off-the-book operatives, House Cipriani will often give preferential treatment to Purist apostates because of their shared bio-conservative ideals and lack of ties to other Houses. They prefer not to deal with posthumans or the heavily augmented when possible, but will make an exception if they are clearly right for the job.

House Dalianis

Primary Influence: Olympus
Secondary Influence: Luna
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Purist
Market Discount: Starships, Rail/Coil Guns, Combat Drones

Dalianis Interplanetary used to be the most economically powerful corporate partnership on Earth, especially during the Consolidation Wars. The partnership was an Alliance military effort, founded by the three best European defense contractors, all brought together by Greek scientists.

The German-owned Keppler Shipyards was the hottest name in starship manufacturing at the time, while British-owned Macrotech Robotics supplied maintenance staff and combat drones, and the French-owned Habarcq Armaments equipped both with weapons. Promethic Technologies, Greece's massive research and development firm, contracted the services of their many thousands of Mimir-tech scientists to all three corporations. Together, they instigated the merger that would one day result in the founding of House Dalianis.

Through Promethic's scientific achievements, the three military contractors were elevated to economic prominence; thus, so was Promethic. This partnership's golden period lasted for several years, until new technologies took hold. With Tahan Power's creation of APEX reactors, Keppler had to cut their profits to acquire the devices for their starships. Likewise, Habarcq began to lose out when Valkyrie cornered the market on particle acceleration weapons. Finally, Hiske Electronics rose up to become a much larger and cheaper manufacturer of drones, reducing Macrotech's hold on the market.

Dalianis is no longer the golden economic giant that they used to be, but they still do quite well for themselves. They are the best manufacturer of starships and the proud owner of the galaxy's largest shipyard, Ansari Station. Thanks to their military origins, the House became the almost-sole manufacturer of the main Coalition Fleet. Included in this deal was the responsibility of manning Tartarus, the Coalition's isolated maximum-security space prison.

When it came time for the Exodus, Keppler Shipyards went out of their way to provide evacuation assistance for Promethic Technologies. And it was during this time that Promethic was able to pull the corporations together and pave the way to unity. Soon after, the House also absorbed Odysseus Station, the Luna-orbiting jump gate research facility. Dalianis continues to capitalize on this asset to this day by striving to improve jump technology, both on ships and by optimizing and expanding the jump ring network.

Shortly after the creation of the Coalition, Dalianis made a deal with Kimura. In exchange for agreeing to buy the majority of their ships' computer systems from them, Kimura would back off of the military drone market and focus their efforts on civilian use. This freed Dalianis to make fighter and combat drones with almost no competition. This trade agreement fostered strong ties between the two corporations, culminating in a lasting alliance between them.

Another benefit of the post-Exodus state of the human race was the positioning of Jinzhan as Dalianis' most frequent and favorite customer. With Jinzhan's determined focus on maintaining the Earth blockade, they have constant demand for ships, drones, and kill-sats. This is the source of Dalianis' only other lasting trade alliance, wherein they "generously" provide their products for the quarantine effort in exchange for access to Jinzhan's, especially the much prized and tightly controlled Vulcan swarms.

Despite their alliances with Jinzhan and Kimura, Dalianis has issues with most of the other Houses. Cipriani, obviously, is a major sore spot because of their energy monopoly.

But that’s not the only reason. During the Consolidation Wars, shared control over Cygnus Alpha’s iron supplies caused many a public incident, and though the iron is not so crucial now, it remains a point of contention. Similarly, Dalianis has green eyes for volatile materials in the Tsarya-owned Ceres ice fields, which Tsarya refuses to relinquish.

Silva, though, is probably Dalianis’ worst enemy, as the two are in constant competition over the arms industry. Silva’s PAc weapons have drastically reduced the market dominance Dalianis had been enjoying because of their railgun and coil gun tech. Now Silva is constantly striving to increase PAc efficiency in environments without air, while Dalianis matches Silva’s efforts by aiding Tsarya in creating more beam-resistant armor. This back-and-forth has gone on for some time; each time one company beats out the other, the other comes out with a competing improvement.

Dalianis is by far the most expansionist of the Houses, which is why they prize Vulcan swarms so highly. Physically, they are already the most spread out, maintaining influence on most Coalition colonies. Dalianis leadership wants to expand human colonization even further though, for two reasons. As a military organization, they recognize the threat that Earth still poses, and wants humanity to have the greatest chance possible of surviving should the technophage get loose. As a corporation, expansion benefits them greatly; a more spread out Coalition means more ships and jump rings will be needed.

Dalianis has slowly been gearing up for their new wave of expansion in several ways, most of them less-than-subtle. Lately, they have been moving in on apostate and remnant territory under the guise of “exploratory R&D.” In reality, they have been claiming said territory as their own, and laying the groundwork for future colonization. Any resistance is met with force by Dalianis’ security subsidiary, Lighthouse.

While most Houses spend their Shadow War efforts attempting to damage each other's market interests, Dalianis spends more time trying to gain public and legitimate power. To lubricate the bureaucratic gears preventing them from colonizing in any official capacity, Dalianis has been focusing their efforts on gaining influence in Olympus. Though the House already has a tremendous amount of influence over the city, they do not have control over the seat of power itself. Dalianis seeks to rectify this, often through particularly “straightforward” methods.

Dalianis is mostly Purist, but this holds little bearing on their interactions with other entities. The Kimuran alliance in particular indicates Dalianis’ willingness to compromise. This willingness holds true for the House’s interactions on an individual level as well. The House hierarchy is increasingly regressing to a feudal structure, and respects the ability to produce results above political concerns. In light of this, a crew of posthumans could obtain backing, membership, and a higher station than the most vocal Purist.

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House Jinzhan

Primary Influence: Shouye
Secondary Influence: Earth Quarantine
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Purist
Market Discount: Construction, Security Technology & Services, Food, Explosives, Ship & Vehicle Weaponry

Jinzhan Developments is a rather unique House in that they are not comprised of several pre-Coalition corporations. China never truly transitioned from their communist government, and had been moving toward imperialism.

Pre-Exodus, Jinzhan Developments was the Chinese government's pet megacorporation. The company monopolized almost all of China's needs, both civilian and military, keeping the money flow heading steadily up the chain. Had China not been hit so hard by the technophage, some speculate that they might have made a move for complete control of humanity's remnants.

When the technophage ravaged China, the capital was one of the first cities to fall. The leadership collapsed, and an already-struggling military faltered and failed. Jinzhan took up the fallen mantle, hired the surviving Chinese military personnel, and ordered their new army of mercenaries to protect their evacuating contractors. To date, it is the largest mercenary operation ever performed, and many of the surviving mercenaries subsequently entered Legion or Protectorate service under Jinzhan membership.

Still, the attack decimated Jinzhan's groundside factories, facilities, and personnel. This resulted in an overall reduction in their market dominance, leaving Jinzhan too weak to reestablish itself as a vast monopoly. Other corporations quickly swept in to secure markets Jinzhan was now too weak to hold. Despite this, Jinzhan was still able to maintain dominance over the construction, food, survival supplies, explosives, and security technologies and service markets: All markets they knew would be critical after the fall of Earth.

Today, Jinzhan's most lucrative product is their food. Shouye, Jinzhan's capital planet, is the only world in the Coalition capable of reliably producing food naturally and in bulk. This garden planet provides a large percentage of the Coalition's produce and prepared food. It tastes far better than the compiled blandness that defaulters and ship crews eat, and as such comes at a premium. Apostates in particular seek to acquire these goods, since they generally have no way of compiling food of their own. As a result, food from Shouye has become very popular on the black market.

The House also has a formidable weapons program. Though Silva and Dalianis are the respective leading developers of particle acceleration and kinetic weapons tech, Jinzhan has made a name for themselves by upscaling these technologies and applying them to vehicles. Jinzhan is also the main provider of explosive weapons, both on personal and vehicle scales.

In addition to all of this, Jinzhan has one other specialty: security technology, software, and services. They have entire subsidiaries devoted to these markets, including a security contractor firm named Guardian, comprised largely of pre-Exodus mercenaries that weren't interested in serving in the Legion. Unlike Lighthouse, Guardian has a reputation for their reliability and by-the-book ethics. Guardian, like the rest of House Jinzhan, tends to have very Purist-leaning ideals. As such, Guardian personnel have been known to overreact when faced with heavily augmented or posthuman opposition.

The Earth quarantine forces consist almost entirely of Jinzhan equipment and personnel, and it is their zealous enforcement of the blockade that is the source of the alliance between Dalianis and Jinzhan. Ships and equipment needed to maintain the quarantine mostly come from Dalianis production facilities, but most of the other R&D that goes into the effort is handled by Jinzhan themselves at Primatech Labs in orbit around Earth.

Past events have resulted in three major developments in Jinzhan society.

The first: religion. To most within House Jinzhan, technology is viewed more as a means of destruction than salvation: It was the failing of humanity that resulted in the destruction of Earth. Still, people must place their faith in something.

This has led to a rise in religion within the House, with traditional Buddhism becoming the most popular. Coalition studies suggest this particular religion is popular for its belief in rebirth, allowing people to cope with the guilt and tragedy of the technophage.

The second development is Jinzhan's growing isolationism and technophobia. Though they still take part in business and political dealings with other Houses, unnecessary interaction is limited. The House all but refuses to acknowledge the existence of apostates in any official capacity, and makes it nearly impossible for apostates to attain membership. Interference by apostates in Jinzhan affairs is usually dealt with swiftly and often violently, so apostates tend to try their best to stay out of House Jinzhan's way.

Jinzhan's growing distrust of technology is primarily aimed at augmentation, advanced AI, and nanotech. Perhaps this is because it was they that created the technophage and loosed it on the Earth. And perhaps they fear making such a horrible mistake again.

While Jinzhan-controlled areas are still covered with meshes, the Monitors charged with watching over them are Beta AIs instead of Gamma AIs. Thus, Jinzhan-controlled meshes aren't nearly as secure as others, but the House supplements with far more human security personnel.

Ironically, the same technology that created the technophage also made Vulcan swarms possible. And it is these swarms that allowed for the rapid creation of livable habitats: a critical necessity during the Exodus. These days, however, Jinzhan rarely uses the Vulcan swarms, and the other Houses have to negotiate long and hard to get their hands on one.

The third development is the desire to destroy Earth once and for all, to erase the memory of its fall, and to destroy the technophage entirely. Few realize just how much of the House's resources go toward researching potential methods or weapons suitable for destroying whole planets.

Given Jinzhan's attitude toward apostates, they often refuse to hire crews with apostate members. The House seems to prefer experienced mercs, which is attributed to their role in the Exodus. This is also probably due to the fact that when Jinzhan bothers to engage in the Shadow War, it is usually for the purposes of acquiring or eliminating a specific target.

It is because of these tendencies, in fact, that Jinzhan involvement is suspected in the Odysseus Station incident three months ago.

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House Kimura

Primary Influence: Chengdan
Secondary Influence: Olympus
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Transhuman
Market Discount: Agents, Computers & Computer Software, Cybersleeves, Cybernetic Augmentations, Virtuality Software, Recon Warframes

Unlike the other Houses, the two companies that combined to become House Kimura were actually in fierce competition until the formation of the Coalition. Both were computer hardware and software engineering firms: the Japanese Aria Softworks and South Korean Hiske Electronics. Together, the corporations held the top two positions in their market, in constant competition with one another. The only reason neither gained a full advantage was because, while Aria's software was superior to Hiske's, Hiske's hardware tended to be faster and more reliable than Aria's. This resulted in intense corporate espionage between the two companies, a sort of proto-Shadow War, long before the foundation of the Houses.

But when talks of unification began, both sides realized that future competition could be better faced, and more easily dominated, if the two tech-giants combined their strengths. In doing so, resources that were previously dedicated to competing with each other were redirected to expanding Kimura's market interests. This birthed a boom of technological innovation from the company, creating ways of producing agents, augmentations, sleeves, and drones more cheaply and efficiently than the other Houses, all without sacrificing any of the quality the two companies had become known for.

Now, like the other Houses, Kimura has their hands in just about every market. Even though its subsidiaries work to diversify the House, Kimura still diverts most of its resources to a few target markets. They remain to this day the premier manufacturer of all forms of computer equipment, software (including Agents), cybersleeves, cyber-augmentations, and civilian drones.

Kimura has a strong relationship with Dalianis thanks to the purchase of Kimuran computer equipment for Dalianis starships. Kimura has agreed to cut them a deal so long as Dalianis stays out of the civilian drone market. But much to Dalianis' chagrin, Kimura has a similar alliance with Silva, who has quietly been trying to ramp up their starship production to more effectively compete with Dalianis.

In addition to their other interests, Kimura is also a strong contender in the warframe market, putting themselves into direct competition with House Tsarya. Interestingly, Kimura was the progenitor of the market, as Aria Softworks invented warframes during the Consolidation Wars. Tsarya didn't come into the picture until after the formation of the Coalition. Lately, this competition has ramped up to ferocious heights, topping that of Aria and Hiske's pre-Coalition levels.

Both Kimura and Tsarya produce top quality warframes, but they have different specialties. Tsarya excels at creating huge, heavily armed and armored tank-like assault warframes. Kimura, on the other hand, specializes in lighter, more agile recon warframes, which also feature better sensors systems.

Kimura's subsidiary, VirtuVac, is currently number one in the creation of both persistent and temporary virtual environments, including many degenerate and sometimes illicit ones. But in the past few years, House Cipriani has begun making moves in this market as well. As virtualities have insanely low cost-to-profit ratios, Kimura has treated this encroachment with uncharacteristic hostility.

More recently, as Cipriani has gained ground in the VR market, the two have taken to sabotaging each other's virtual environments. These attacks are done from the inside by sending hackers into the VR to destabilize it using CISTs and Savant Programs. Both Houses publicly deny this of course, usually while still trying to place the blame for crashes and the like on the other House.

Due to the high quality of Kimura's equipment and software, it is built into a large percentage of the Coalition's electronics. This high percentage of market saturation initially created a small customer service issue: there were too many devices and not enough employees to provide support. This problem was solved in two ways. The first was through standardized implementation of backdoors into the House's software that would allow technicians to gain easy remote access to the devices. The second way was by openly recruiting SIMs who could provide on-site assistance much more efficiently and quickly than a person in the physical world ever could.

Since the incorporation of SIMs, Kimura has found a cornucopia of uses for them. Kimura now employs more SIMs than any other House. Officially, they began incorporating them into software development and testing from the get-go, rather than just maintenance and customer support. Unofficially, they employ a massive spy network composed of thousands of SIMs, all keeping tabs on the other Houses, hiding relatively unseen in their meshes and the Extranet.

Politically, Kimura is extremely liberal and does not support the Humanity Preservation Act in any shape or form. Despite this, they—for the most part—prefer to avoid violence. Many Kimurans have embraced the Astralist faith, and a large number of contracts and peace treaties are arbitrated by a Kimuran Astralist. This does not mean that the House is weak, however, as it has more than enough muscle to bring to bear when faced with no other option.

Prior to the technophage, Aria Softworks had strong ties to the Yakuza, who paid Aria handsomely to provide evacuation assistance during the Exodus. Since then the Yakuza has evolved into the Red Sun and shifted its loyalty to House Kimura. Any time Kimura needs something done off the books, particularly violent things they don't want to sully their pacifist hands with, the Red Sun gets it done. In exchange, Kimura, who otherwise has a rather harsh zero-tolerance policy toward crime, turns a blind eye to the Red Sun's day-to-day activities.

In general, this means that crews working for Kimura rarely deal with Kimura directly. Official business almost always goes through official channels, except when it requires assistance from the underworld for one reason or another.

Anything pertaining to the Shadow War, as well as any other seedy job, is handled by Red Sun representatives through a shell subsidiary called Crimson & Sons. Regardless of the nature of the job, Kimura prefers to hire transhumans or those affiliated with Red Sun in some way—being both is even better. Most Purists are treated with suspicion and distrust, as Kimura fears they might be Cipriani spies.

House Silva

Primary Influence: Luna
Secondary Influence: Phobos
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Transhuman
Market Discount: Biosleeves, Biotech Augmentations, PAc Weaponry

Silva Corp is essentially composed of non-military elements of the Alliance that chose consolidation and profit over patriotism and war with the Coalition. Silva began with the American weapons manufacturer Valkyrie Industrial and the Canadian biotech research firm Biogenics United.

When the technophage struck, the two companies focused their efforts on protecting and evacuating their own employees, their high-ranking military contacts, and reputable employees from competing arms and biotech corporations (who were of course forced to sign contracts in exchange for being saved). Those survivors were later joined by the surviving Brazilian refugees who were lucky enough to have been ascending the beanstalk when the technophage hit, along with the Americans willing to sign contracts to get off of an increasingly over-populated Luna.

Most of these refugees didn't belong to any one company, however, and were instead divided between Valkyrie and Biogenics United according to their strengths and reputations. Those that lacked skills or education of interest to Silva were offered contracts that made them little better than indentured servants. Sometimes those contracts actually turned out to be ploys to obtain test subjects for bio-experimentation.

Silva's market interests haven't changed much since the formation of the Coalition. They still produce the best biosleeves, biotech augmentations, and PAc weapons on the market.

Though they specialize in particle acceleration technology, Silva's subsidiary Valkyrie Interplanetary has the largest weapons output of all the corporations, holding most of the Coalition's arms contracts.

These weapon contracts are the House's single largest source of income. On occasion, Silva will covertly supply apostates, particularly Alliance remnants, with weapons to level the playing field between those factions and the Coalition. By supplying them with enough to stay competitive, they keep the Coalition's demand for weapons up.

Great care is taken to conceal this activity, since it could severely damage the House and the Coalition as a whole should the truth get out. Like all moves in the Shadow War, those who might expose the truth are not often seen again.

On a similar note, Silva cares very little for the Humanity Preservation Act, or the purity of humanity at all for that matter. The research and development side of the biotech department regularly breaks the HPA, and has faced sanctions on a number of occasions. This causes much embarrassment for the House, not because they care about the ramifications of their actions, but because they got caught. In most instances, this results in the employee at fault being demoted, fired, or in extreme cases reassigned for use as a test subject—which the official records usually call "administrative leave."

Silva's weapons program is a huge point of contention with Dalianis. In-atmosphere, PAc weapons outclass kinetic weapons by leaps and bounds, and Silva's are the best. Dalianis' specialty is in railguns and coil guns, so they are constantly seeking to undermine Silva's PAc technology. To this effect, Dalianis has been working with Tsarya to create more PAc-resistant armors. At the same time, Silva has been striving to work around PAc weapons' out-of-atmo shortcomings. In addition, they have been trying to quietly expand their starship production line with the intention of forcing Dalianis to direct more resources into the starship market instead of anti-PAc tech.

Despite Silva's questionable motivations and actions, they are generally on good terms with the four other Houses.

Silva has used Tsarya for their illegal contacts and services since before the formation of the Coalition. They tap this resource when they need weapons handed off to apostates, illegal biotech materials smuggled past customs, or test subjects when they run out of indentured servants.

Cipriani is also an ally, mostly due to their mutual friendship with Tsarya and a common enemy in Dalianis. They have no special love for one another, but they do share some business ventures and territory; this includes finding ways to assist one another in putting Dalianis off-balance.

Silva's most recent ally is Kimura. Kimura supplies the electronics equipment for Silva's expanding shipbuilding program, and in return Silva provides discounted PAc weapons for Kimura's Recon Warframes. This isn't public knowledge, of course, as House Tsarya certainly wouldn't appreciate Silva handing their competitor an edge in the warframe market.

Even before the Exodus, Neo-Christianity was common in the Alliance territories, and it is still popular with Silva's citizens—mostly for the sake of convenience. It is a relatively straightforward religion that gives its believers relief from the mortal concerns of life, while providing an agreeable code of conduct that requires a minimum of dedication and interference with daily business.

Unlike many of the other Houses, Silva's governing style has changed very little. They stick with what they know and continue to run as a corporation first and foremost. Citizens are regarded more as employees than citizens of a government, and are treated as such. It's even possible to get fired. Termination means exile and a big Rep hit. The person may still default, but he can no longer seek employment with the House.

At the same time, Silva has a strict yet relatively simple membership application process for apostates who wish to join. If the applicant can prove that they have skills the House values then they're pretty good to go, provided they pass the rather extensive background check. If the individual lacks any valuable skills or fails the background check, they are sometimes accepted anyway. However, these individuals usually find a clause in their contract that lands them in a biotech R&D lab with a tag that says "volunteer for experimentation."

When it comes to mercenary crews, Silva is fairly strict in their hiring process. The crew must have a reputation for completing missions quickly, efficiently, and most importantly, discreetly. Silva will not work with anyone who is responsible for having exposed House secrets to the public, whether their own or those of any other House.

Silva also has a reputation for including a "reset" clause in their mercenary contracts. These clauses state that Apotheosized mercs must be backed up before being offered the contract. And in the event of death and restoration from backup, Silva retains the right to withhold any information about the previous mission.

House Tsarya

Primary Influence: Proch
Secondary Influence: Luna
Primary Evolutionary Agenda: Purist
Market Discount: Vehicular & Personal Armor, Ground Vehicles, Assault Warframes

Tsarya Systems sprang up from two of the more controversial pre-Exodus corporations. Unlike Dalianis, which started as a military-funded venture, Tsarya's predecessors were completely privately owned. Again, unlike Dalianis, both companies relied heavily on war to make money, and were investigated for war profiteering on numerous occasions. In reality, it was only the Russian armor fabrication company Risel Armory who was actually guilty. The Indian vehicle manufacturer Adani Motors found themselves heavily compensated for their silence regarding the matter.

After the Exodus, it was only natural for the two companies to band together to form a House. From the beginning, Tsarya has been the top manufacturer of armor, both personal and vehicular, and ground vehicles. A short time after the formation of the Coalition, Tsarya reverse-engineered a handful of Kimuran warframes and adapted Kimura's designs to build their own. Tsarya's predilection toward war machinery and armor made them a natural fit for the market, eventually rising to be on par with Kimura's warframe designs. The larger Tsaryan frames would eventually come to be considered the Assault Class of warframes.

In the warframe market, Kimura is Tsarya's main competitor, and the competition can grow fierce. Despite their efforts to reverse-engineer recon warframes, Tsarya isn't able to match Kimura's innovation in that class. That said, Kimuran armor doesn't hold a candle to Tsarya's, who goes to great lengths to prevent Kimura from getting their hands on Tsaryan metallurgy data. As a result, Kimuran assault warframes tend to be inferior to Tsaryan designs. This difference in specialization is why Tsarya has been able to rise so quickly and successfully into the warframe market, but it is also why neither House has been able to maintain dominance in the market.

Tsarya's only other real competitor is Dalianis, who covets the pockets of volatile materials distributed throughout the Ceres ice fields. But at the same time, Dalianis has been devoting a lot of resources to aiding Tsarya in developing better PAc-resistant armors to hurt Silva's position as the market leader in PAc weaponry. Aside from that, Tsarya is on relatively good terms with the other Houses. In particular, its allegiances with Cipriani and Silva are especially strong.

Cipriani has a long-standing trade agreement with Tsarya, through which they purchase armor and transplasidium for use in their more expensive vehicles.

Silva's relationship with Tsarya is far less legitimate, with Tsarya utilizing their black market contacts to smuggle and sell apostates to Silva. These apostates aren't technically slaves, but anyone who thinks he has a real chance of earning House membership is a fool.

Tsarya's general lack of conflict with the other Houses is something of an oddity since they have their hand in so many illegal and questionable activities.

They have a solid relationship with slave traders that prey upon apostates, wherein Tsarya offers citizenship under the pretenses of "saving" the apostates from the slavers. In fact, the citizenship contracts are just shy of slavery themselves. Tsarya has these smugglers on speed dial, and they often hand off weapons to apostates or transport HPA-violating contraband between labs for Silva.

House Tsarya itself has very little use for in-House smugglers. The main reason they keep these smuggling and slave-trading contacts on tap is for the profit that outsourcing them brings in.

House Tsarya profits most from conflict and the House leadership generally has no qualms with war profiteering. There just has to be a war to profit from.

When profits start to dry up, House Tsarya sometimes takes matters into their own hands. On occasion, they will pool their illegal contacts to instigate (or sometimes outright fabricate) attacks from apostate or remnant forces. On at least one of these occasions, Silva assisted in staging a real attack using Tsarya's contacts within rebel forces composed of remnants of the old Alliance government.

Tsarya has an odd, two-faced stance on apostates. On one hand, it appears to be the easiest House to obtain citizenship from. Their guidelines for application appear more lenient than those of the other Houses, but in truth, acceptance is nearly impossible to obtain. The slightest mistake on the apostate's part can lead to him being blacklisted for decades.

The other side to the coin is an extremely aggressive response to apostate aggression, which the House vehemently pushes in Council meetings. Tsarya's motivations are fairly transparent, in that they clearly profit from the resulting conflict. And of course, many of the incidents of "apostate aggression" that Tsarya demands justice for were either incited or fabricated by Tsarya themselves.

Many of these fabricated attacks are organized by apostates who have been promised House citizenship for their aid in setting up the attacks. And a few of them, those that survived the resulting conflict, actually got it.

Tsarya traditionally leans toward more conservative attitudes in regards to augmentation and Apotheosis. The House includes a large number of members of traditional religions, who tend to disapprove of such things.

However, soldiers who can fight and die—then fight and die again—need a lot of gear. And they keep the fight going. Thus, while the House tends toward Purist ideals, the House's leadership has been making an effort to spread a message of acceptance regarding the Apotheosized.

This shift toward transhuman and posthuman acceptance has caused a bit of friction within the House. Religion holds much power within the House, and most citizens aren't willing to start accepting "the soulless" just because the heads of the House suddenly think they're alright. On the other hand, the number of transhumanists and posthumans within the House is growing, and most truly appreciate that their House is making an effort to spread a message of tolerance.

Tsarya tends to be rather open with its crew-hiring processes. While previously avoidant of transhumans, these days they'll happily hire them for the more dangerous jobs. Times are changing, and the Apotheosized are expendable.

They do, however, prefer to hire transhumans associated with Tsarya, or at least Silva.

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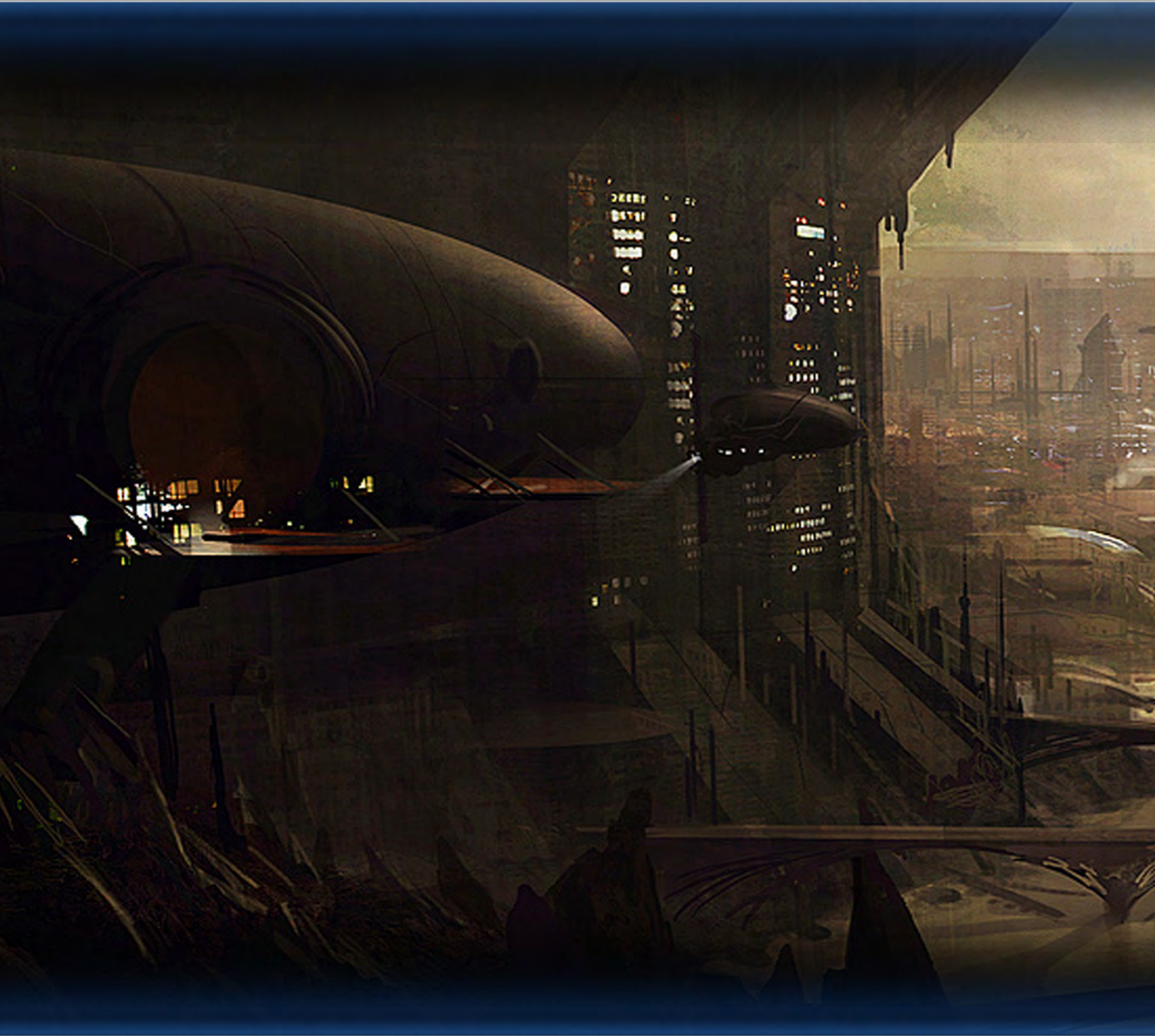

GAMEPLAY

GETTING READY TO PLAY

The first half of this book described the setting of *Nova Praxis* in some detail. The second half, starting with this chapter, focuses on playing the game.

Nova Praxis requires at least two people to play. Four or five is generally optimal. One will have the role of game master (GM), while the others are just called players.

It is the GM's job to run the game. He or she should make themself familiar with the setting and the rules, and come up with a basic scenario for the players to interact with.

As the GM presents each scene, she should remember to describe the world around the player's characters in detail. What does the place look like? What does it smell like? You want to paint a picture in your players' imaginations.

Each scene you describe should feature some kind of obstacle that must be overcome, or at least the potential for one. Sometimes it might be a physical obstacle, like a gaping chasm or a slobbering alien beast. Other times the obstacle might be more social in nature, like a scene that focuses on negotiating the terms of a job or talking down a hostage-taker. It's also possible that the obstacle takes the form of a search for clues that reveals more of the story and links to the next scene.

After the GM describes the scene, the players can then describe how they intend to overcome the challenges they face. Their player characters (PCs) have Aspects, Skills, Stunts, and gear that determine what their options are and how likely they are to succeed.

The rest of this book will be dedicated to providing rules for creating characters and for arbitrating their success or failure.

But first, we'll spend a little time helping the GM develop her scenarios.

GAME MASTERY

Chances are that if you're going to be the GM, you've already started thinking about the types of scenarios you'd like to run. In this section, we'll provide you with a little inspiration and some tools to get you started.

Players, feel free to skip this section and jump straight to "The Basics" on page 102.

Campaign Type

Nova Praxis makes a loose assumption that the PCs will be a crew of Auxiliaries, mercenaries involved in the Shadow War. They'll be hired to do jobs their employers, usually high-ranking House officials, would rather keep off the books. However, while we will continue to explore this type of campaign in the coming pages, it is certainly not the only way to play.

Your PCs might instead be investigators working for the Protectorate, or apostates trying to establish a new enclave. Maybe they are pirates trying to score a big payday. Maybe they are soldiers on the front lines of military action against a remnant force. Maybe they are part of an exploration team in search of interesting new planets to colonize. Or maybe they are just a bunch of down-on-their-luck smugglers getting by any way they can.

The important thing to remember is that *Nova Praxis* is a setting and a rule set. It is not a style of play. You can't play it "wrong" so long as you and your players are having fun.

As has been stated before though, the following section will assume characters are associated with the Shadow War in some way. This assumption provides a jumping-off point for GMs, and allows us to talk about gameplay in a more focused manner.

Agents of Shadow

The Agents of Shadow campaign style assumes that the PCs have connections both within Coalition and apostate society. They are probably members of a House, but also have allies (and maybe enemies) among the other Houses. If they are apostates, they have figured out ways to enter into Coalition society and make use of it to their benefit. They are Auxiliaries, solo agents or members of a crew that walk on both sides of the fence, exploiting both Coalition and apostate societies in an effort to fulfill their mission and get paid.

Modus Operandi

At first glance, it might appear that Coalition security measures are insurmountable. Mesh sensors, such as the ARIS strips that line most walls, serve as the eyes and ears for unseen Monitors that never sleep.

Weapons technology is almost entirely illegal, and checkpoints outfitted with cutting edge scanning technology guard the entrances and exits of population centers. Humanoid sentry drones walk the beat for the Protectorate, supplementing the human forces.

Mimir-tech devices, secured by dedicated AIs, feature strict mandates on how they may be used. Compilers only work for verified Coalition citizens, and even then only in sanctioned locations.

The Rep system is reviewed by the AIs at Inter-Rep, and any attempt to exploit the system is flagged, reported, and the offending account suspended pending investigation.

So how do groups of would-be lawbreakers get anything done in a society that relies on such extreme peacekeeping measures? They use the back doors.

The Shadow War is, at its heart, a battle between the Houses. Thus, the Houses have the power to create “opportunities” for their Auxiliaries.

False CIDs go a long way toward bypassing the worst of the security measures. A false CID risks exposure each time it is used to make a purchase, call in a favor, bump someone’s Rep, or do anything else overt. But until it is exposed, all such transactions are linked to the false CID. While the Monitors are capable of facial recognition and voice analysis, these methods of identification are only used when no CID is detected. After all, faces and voices can easily be changed.

But even without a good false CID, an agent can often get around simply by knowing the right people. The Networking Skill represents the quality and quantity of friends, allies, contacts, and informants among the Houses or apostates, which can be called upon for information and services.

This can be handy when trying to locate an area that isn’t covered by the local mesh sensors, or when striking a deal with security personnel to ignore suspicious behavior or contraband. Friends in low places can often be as useful as friends on high.

Like all modern technology, the security systems used by the Protectorate are based on Mimir-tech. This means they are immune to hacking attempts. That is, of course, unless you have access to Savant Programs or a CIST. Savants, or someone with a CIST, can hamper or even assume control of some local security measures, making them much sought-after agents.

In truth, these techniques to get through and around the system could be closed by the Coalition if it so desired, but it doesn’t. It’s through the use of these methods and tools that the Houses’ Auxiliaries work. These backdoors allow crews to perform their missions, and are commonly used by the Houses to keep the Shadow War under wraps.

OPERATIONS

The term Shadow War tends to conjure images of knife-wielding assassins in the dark. While that's certainly part of it, things are generally much more complicated than that.

For starters, agents in the Shadow War often have no idea that's what they are participating in. Most people have no idea the war is even taking place, so those who get involved usually believe themselves to be taking part in isolated unethical or criminal activity. A hidden war? A massive conspiracy reaching all the way to the Senate? Apostates and citizens stealing and smuggling for the Houses? That's crazy, right?

Despite the variety of missions a crew might take on as it becomes entangled in the Shadow War, there are a few things that tend to be pretty common.

The Houses rarely hire Auxiliaries directly, but rather through subsidiaries or proxies. It's even possible that the crew might be hired through apostates, gang leaders, or other outsiders.

Potential agents are told very little; once the contracts are signed, they are told the minimum amount necessary to complete their mission. It is not uncommon for the patron to leave out important details because they weren't considered relevant or there were other reasons to keep the crew in the dark.

Just because a potential agent isn't a member of the House in question, doesn't mean that they aren't a viable candidate. Most mercenary crews who get involved in the Shadow War are of mixed backgrounds. For these folks, Rep and resources are worth more than any sense of House loyalty. Many are even apostates, which can be handy when the crew needs to rely on apostate contacts or resources to get the job done.

The Mission

The patron may offer the crew any number of things in exchange for their service. Rep bumps are common, but so are favors or extremely valuable items like spacecraft.

Whatever the case, once the contracts are signed the crew is on its own. They may be given a method to contact the employer, but usually they are given orders to limit communication.

Below are some sample starting points or cover stories for missions that crews might be expected to handle:

- Break into a House subsidiary office and retrieve a unique compiler template.
- Retrieve the mnemonic core of a prominent House citizen believed to have died in a pirate attack.
- Determine the staging point for raids carried out by remnant forces, and kill their leader.
- Rescue the kidnapped daughter of a famous template writer.
- Track down and kill a low-level manager of a subsidiary who got caught trading secrets with another House.
- Bring back the mnemonic core of the leader of a merc crew who broke contract and turned against its employer.
- Exterminate an infestation of posthuman aberrations created by a biological experiment gone wrong.
- Provide "aggressive security" for an Extranet celebrity who has been receiving death threats.
- Dig up dirt on a popular spokesman for the HPA to make sure his latest amendment doesn't get added.
- Investigate the cause of an explosion at a mining colony believed to have been uninhabited for years.

THE BASICS

Things You Should Have

In addition to this book, you'll need a few other supplies to play the game. Here's a list of mandatory items as well as some recommended ones.

You'll need…

- A set of FUDGE dice (or two six-sided dice of differing colors) for each player and the GM.
- Some character sheets or at least blank paper to record characters on.
- Friends. The sweet spot's three to four.

You'll find useful…

- A set of poker chips or glass beads to use as Fate Points.
- A laptop or tablet computer. The PDF version of this book is formatted specifically for these, and you may find the hyperlinks throughout the book useful for quickly finding what you need during play.

Preparation

- Determine who are the players and who is the GM.
- Familiarize yourselves with the game. At the very least, the GM should be familiar enough with Nova Praxis to explain it to the players.
- Spend a little time making sure everyone is on the same page with what to expect from the game, and that they are excited about their characters.

Rolling the Dice

When you want your character to perform an action, your GM may call on you to roll the dice. This is called performing a **test**.

FATE uses FUDGE dice: a set of four six-sided dice marked with either a "+", "-", or "0" (blank) on each side. To perform a test, you roll the four FUDGE Dice and total them up. Each plus counts as +1, each minus counts as -1, and a blank (or 0) counts as 0. The average result of a die roll is 0, but can range from -4 to +4.

Once you've rolled the dice, add the result to any relevant modifiers to find your total **Effort**. Usually a test will call for you to add your rating in a specific Skill to the roll.

For instance, if you were told to "make an Athletics test," you'd roll the dice, add your Athletics **Skill Rank**, and then add any other relevant modifiers to find the total. The total, your Effort, is then compared to a **difficulty (Diff)** rating set by the GM to determine success or failure.

If your Effort is equal to or higher than the difficulty, you succeed at your task. The amount by which you succeed is measured in **Shifts**. The more Shifts you generate, the better you did. See pg. 106 for more on degrees of success.

So, when a character wants to make a test, he follows this simple formula to determine how well he does:

4 FUDGE Dice + Skill Rank + Other Modifiers = Effort

Modifiers can be anything from bonuses granted from **Aspects** to those provided by **Stunts** or **Augmentations**.

For example, if your Skill Rank is 2 and you roll: +,-,0,+ (for a total of +1), your total Effort is 3. If the difficulty of the test is 3 or less, your Effort is sufficient and you succeed.

Skill Ranks & Difficulties

Skills represent what a character can do, or rather, how well they can do it. They are ranked starting at 0 and get better as the rank increases. A character with a rank 0 Skill has very little natural ability and no training in that particular area of expertise. A rank of 5 means the character is one of the best in the known worlds with that Skill. Any Skill the character doesn't put any Skill Ranks in during character creation defaults to 0.

So while a character with an Athletics rank of 0 may break a sweat walking up a short flight of stairs, a character with a Pilot rank of 5 can work miracles in the cockpit.

Skill Rank	What that means…
0	**Mediocre** – You've had no exposure or experience.
1	**Average** – You are familiar with the subject at hand, but have little experience.
2	**Fair** – Some training or education.
3	**Good** – You are sometimes noticed for your talents.
4	**Great** – You are one of the most talented people in the field and considered by most to be an expert.
5	**Superb** – You are among the truly elite.
6+	**Super Human** – Impossible to achieve without augmentation.

"Stacking" Bonuses and Penalties

Whether by invoking Aspects or by purchasing Stunts, there are a lot of ways to get bonuses applied to a test.

In *Nova Praxis*, almost everything stacks. This means that if you get a +2 bonus from one source and a +1 bonus from another, you may add those together for a total of a +3 bonus.

Unless it is clearly stated otherwise, you can assume any bonuses or penalties you have will stack with any others.

Difficulty	What that means…
0	**Trivial** – Requires little effort or attention. The GM should usually just declare tests this easy an automatic success.
1	**Easy** – Requires only a small amount of effort.
2	**Moderate** – A simple task, but requires a bit of effort.
3	**Tough** – Pretty difficult for someone without training.
4	**Hard** – Almost impossible without some training or uncanny luck.
5	**Very Hard** – You need to be good to pull this off, an expert in the field.
6	**Exceedingly Difficult** – You're going to need to be both highly skilled and very lucky.
7	**Seemingly Impossible** – You've really got to stack the deck in your favor to hope to pull this off.

Skills

Assets
Cohesion
Networking, Apostate
Networking, House
Demolitions
Diplomacy
Education
Engineering, Hardware
Engineering, Software
Firearms
Guile
Insight
Intimidation
Melee

Mnemonics
Pilot
Research
Resolve
Stealth
Strategy

Physical Skills
Athletics
Endurance
Perception

Special Skill
SINC

Taking Action

Test

A test is an action wherein a Skill is rolled against a difficulty set by the GM. They are used to see if a character can perform a task, and to determine how well he did. The GM describes the situation, selects the appropriate Skill, and sets the difficulty. The player then rolls the dice and totals up his Effort.

If the resulting Effort is equal to or greater than the difficulty, the character succeeds. The amount by which he succeeds is measured in Shifts.

Generating 3 or more Shifts results in Spin. Failure by 3 or more is a Stall. See page 106 for more on Spin and Stall.

Some sample tests include:

- Looking up an obscure fact (Research)
- Searching a crime scene for fingerprints (Perception)
- Noticing a strange pattern in the bullet holes in a wall (Insight)

Contest

Contests are very much like tests, except the action is in direct opposition to someone else. Rather than setting a difficulty, each party performs an appropriate Skill test.

The Effort generated by each contestant's Skill test is compared, and the highest wins. A tie means both succeed, but whether that means the outcome changes anything, or if it calls for another test, depends on the situation. Some sample contests include:

- Attempting to get away with a simple lie (Guile vs. Insight)
- Sneaking past a sentry drone (Stealth vs. Perception)

Conflict

Conflicts happen when two or more characters come into opposition in a fashion that cannot be quickly and cleanly resolved with a simple test or contest.

A conflict is broken down into a number of rounds, during which each character gets a turn. During his turn, a character may attack another. This is a contest between an appropriate Skill based on the nature of the attack and a Skill used for defense. The Effort generated by the defender's defense test sets the difficulty for the attacker's attack test.

The defender suffers an amount of stress equal to the Shifts generated by the attack, plus the attacker's weapon's Weapon Rating. If the defender is wearing armor that could protect him from the attack, the amount of stress the defender suffers is reduced by his armor's Armor Rating. The remaining stress may then be further reduced by electing to suffer Consequences.

See page 120 for more on conflicts and Consequences.

Time and Actions in Conflict

On your turn, you can perform one Simple Action and one Free Action. Some Stunts or Augmentations may allow you to perform additional actions or Instant Actions.

Simple Actions: These are the most common actions a character will take on his turn. They require some effort, and are the focus of his attention during his turn.

Free Actions: These are very quick actions that can be taken on your turn. Moving into an adjacent zone is a Free Action.

Instant Actions: These actions can be taken at any time, even when it's not your turn. You may only take Instant Actions under certain circumstances, and are limited to one per turn. Performing a defense test is a special kind of Instant Action that doesn't count toward the number you can take in a round.

Extended Actions

Some actions simply cannot be resolved in the short amount of time usually allotted to a test or contest, but aren't really a conflict. Examples of this might include repairing a starship's APEX reactor, writing a template, or trying to sway a crowd to your point of view.

Extended Actions have difficulties and marks. Set the difficulty as you would for a normal test. Then multiply the difficulty by 3 to set the mark.

Unlike a regular test, instead of making one Skill test to see if you succeed or fail, you perform several. Once the Shifts you generate are added up, you succeed at the Extended Action if the total number of Shifts you have generated equals the Extended Action's mark.

If you generate Spin, the Extended Action's mark is reduced by 1. If you Stall, you have failed in some catastrophic way, making it impossible to continue.

The amount of time each test takes depends on the situation, and is up to the GM.

Some examples of Extended Actions are:

Extended Action	Time	Diff	Mark
Building a short wooden bridge	1 hour	3	9
Bringing a heavily damaged APEX reactor back online	10 min	4	12

Supplemental Actions

Sometimes a character needs to do something else while performing a Simple Action.

Sometimes the combined actions are straightforward, like drawing a weapon and attacking; sometimes it's more complex. When the character performs a test as a Simple Action while doing something else at the same time, this is referred to as taking a **Supplemental Action**. The Supplemental Action imposes a -1 on the character's primary Simple Action test.

When in doubt about which is the primary action and which is the supplemental one, the Supplemental Action is the one which would normally require no test, or would have the lowest difficulty if it were tested.

In some cases the GM may decide a Supplemental Action is particularly complicated or difficult, and may increase the supplemental penalty appropriately.

Combining Skills

Sometimes the character needs to perform a task that actively requires two or more Skills at once. You never know when a character is going to need to carry a heavy weight (Athletics) while shooting at some aberrant horror (Firearms).

In those situations, the GM calls for a test based on the main Skill being used (the primary thrust of the action), but modified by a second Skill. If the second Skill is of a higher rating than the first, it grants a +1 bonus to the test; if the second Skill is of a lesser rating, it applies a -1 penalty. If they are the same, the secondary Skill provides no modifier.

It's important to note that combining Skills can never be done to perform two full actions at once—if that's the goal, it should take two turns.

Supplemental Action or Combined Skills?

The difference between an action that combines Skills and a Supplemental Action (pg. 105) is not always obvious. In general, Skills are combined if you would expect to make tests for both components of the action.

If the lesser part of the action is something that normally doesn't require a test, it should be handled as a Supplemental Action.

Don’t have any FUDGE dice?

You can use two six-sided dice instead. First, designate one d6 as the positive die, and the other as the negative. Roll them both and subtract the result of the negative die from the result of the positive.

Be aware that this changes the range of possible results from -4 to +4 to a range of -5 to +5, and tends to yield more random results. So if you don’t have any FUDGE dice, or prefer the more randomized results, d6-d6 provides a good solution. Just make sure that everyone is using the same method.

Degree of Success

When performing a test, the more Shifts you generate, the better you do. This means that highly trained characters tend to not only succeed, but succeed with flair.

Effort	**Description**
0 Shifts	**Minimal Success** – You pulled it off—barely, and possibly at some minor cost to yourself.
1 Shift	**Notable Success** – This is a clear-cut success. The character’s result is solid, reliable, and while it may not be inspired, it gets the job done.
3 Shifts	**Significant Success (Spin!)** – The success is sufficient enough to be noticeably well done, with exceptional speed, grace, or quality. A significant success or better generates Spin (see below).
5 Shifts	**Potent Success** – Not only is the quality of the success remarkable, it may have some unexpected secondary benefits, such as deeper insight into a problem at hand.

Spin and Stall

In its broadest sense, Spin is a special effect that occurs whenever your Effort exceeds the test difficulty by 3 or more, resulting in 3 or more Shifts. You don’t just succeed, you succeed with speed, grace, and style.

When you generate Spin on a test, in addition to overcoming the challenge, you can also elect to create a short-lived **Temporary Aspect** (pg. 113) called an **Effect Aspect** that reflects the result of your exceptional speed, grace, wit, etc.

Effect Aspects are very ephemeral. Once invoked or compelled, they go away. Like other Aspects, they can be invoked or compelled for free the first time (pg. 109).

You may not create more than one Effect Aspect per round.

For example, if you generate Spin on an Athletics test to climb over a wall, you might do so quickly enough to spray some molecular glue on the top of the wall before dropping over. This would leave behind a *Super Sticky Wall* Effect Aspect for your pursuers, possibly resulting in one of them getting stuck to the wall and unable to continue chasing you.

When the amount of Effort you generate falls short of the difficulty by 3 or more, you **Stall**. Stall is the opposite of Spin, denoting a significant or embarrassing failure. If the GM wishes, Stall (like Spin) can also create an Effect Aspect.

Effect Aspects can be created with attack and defense tests as well, but can only be created on attack tests by electing to reduce the number of Shifts generated by 1. These Aspects can be placed on the scene, a zone, or even on your foe.

In the case of a contest or conflict test, Spin overrides Stall. The same action should never both grant one participant Spin and the other Stall.

In some cases, as outlined in some Stunts and elsewhere, generating Spin or Stall can result in additional effects.

Aspects

More than any other attribute, Aspects are what make the character who he or she is. An Aspect can be any phrase or quote that tells you and the GM something important about your character. Typically, an Aspect will relate to a part of the character's personality, past, goals, training, disabilities, or other defining characteristics.

Other things may have Aspects as well: other characters, objects, zones, places—just about anything in the game world.

Aspects may at first seem daunting to new players, but in a nutshell, this is how they work:

- You may spend a Fate Point to invoke (pg. 109) an Aspect to benefit you in a way that is relevant to the Aspect.
- The GM (or another character) may compel (pg. 110) an Aspect, harming you or creating complications for you in ways that relate to the Aspect.
- You may create an Aspect by performing a Maneuver (pg. 115) or by making a Declaration (pg. 117).
- You may discover a previously unknown Aspect by performing an Assessment (pg. 116).

Some Sample Aspects:

Trained by Corporal Frank Sheppard
"Always on the run"
"Nobody gets left behind!"
Never Forgets an Insult

Fate Points & Refresh

Fate Points (FPs) are spent to invoke Aspects, and you gain a Fate Point when you suffer from an Aspect being compelled.

At the beginning of each game session, you get to **Refresh**. Upon Refresh, you get a number of Fate Points equal to your **Refresh Rating.**

Fate Points do not carry over between game sessions. Use them or lose them.

New characters begin play with a Refresh Rating of 5.

Pure characters, and characters with the Refreshed Stunt, have higher Refresh Ratings.

Stress and Consequences

Bullets and beams rend and burn flesh. The mind recoils in the face of a posthuman abomination, or in response to the trauma of death and resleeving.

When you suffer **stress** from an attack, the amount you suffer is checked off on your Stress Track from left to right.

Once all your stress boxes are checked, you are **Taken Out**. However, you may elect to avoid some amount of stress taken from an attack by electing to suffer a **Consequence**.

Consequences are essentially **Temporary Aspects** that describe how the attack has affected you. Just like other Aspects, they can be compelled or even sometimes invoked. For example, a Mild Physical Consequence might be a Sprained Ankle, while a Severe(P) Mental Consequence may be described as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Like any other Aspect created as a direct result of a character's actions, a Consequence can be invoked or compelled for free the first time (pg. 109).

Severe(P) and Extreme(P) Consequences are considered to be Persistent (pg. 113), as denoted with a (P), allowing you to invoke or compel them for a +2 bonus (or -2 penalty) or reroll for free.

Note that mooks (pg. 253) are often unable to take the full allotment of Consequences. See page 120 for more on conflicts, stress, and Consequences.

ASPECTS AND FATE POINTS

Typically, an Aspect will relate to some strongly held belief, an event or important person from the character's past, an item of importance to the character, a part of her personality, or a goal.

Aspects are used to describe important aspects of your character, but keep in mind that not every character quirk or detail need be an Aspect. For example, your character may be overly fond of blue hats, and that's an interesting character quirk, but it isn't something that's likely to come up much in play.

Aspects should describe parts of your character that you wish to be relevant to your campaign. This insures that your character can shine in situations you wish him to shine in, and is a subtle message to the GM about what types of scenes you'd like to see take place in the campaign.

Phrasing an Aspect

An Aspect can be written as a few words, a short sentence, or a quote. A character's Aspects should always be at least three words long, but generally no more than a full sentence.

Remember that Aspects can help your character overcome challenges, but at the same time are a source of Fate Points.

Thus, an Aspect should work like a double-edged sword. The Aspect can benefit you, but it should also be a source of interesting complications and challenges. But don't worry! Any time your Aspects harm you, or make life more challenging for you, you get more Fate Points!

To make sure your Aspects are good ones, you should be able to clearly describe at least three different examples of how the Aspect might both benefit and harm you.

Some examples of good Aspects are:

Trained by Corporal Frank Sheppard
Always on the Run
"Nobody gets left behind!"
"Soon this city will belong to me!"
Always Underestimated
Never Forgets an Insult

Scope

As a general rule, a character may invoke or compel only one Aspect per scope, per test. For example, the character could invoke a Character Aspect and an Aspect created by a Maneuver for a single test, but not two Character Aspects.

The types of scopes that Aspects fall into are:

- Character Aspects
- Consequences
- Stunt Aspects
- Scene Aspects
- Augmentation Aspects
- Zone Aspects
- Another Character's Aspects
- Equipment Aspects
- Temporary Aspects

Note that Persistent Aspects can always be used, and do not count against scope limits.

Refresh

At the beginning of each game session or whenever the GM believes all the characters need a boost (such as in the middle of an especially long game session), each character has his number of Fate Points reset back to his Refresh Rating.

Characters have a Refresh Rating of 5 unless they are Pure (pg. 155) or have the Refreshed Stunt (pg. 173).

Invoking an Aspect

(Spending Fate Points)

You may spend a Fate Point to make an Aspect important (or at least relevant) to the scene in a way that benefits you. This is called invoking an Aspect.

To invoke an Aspect, you need to spend a Fate Point, announce the Aspect you are invoking, and (if necessary) explain why the Aspect you chose is beneficial to you. This might be one of your character's Aspects, an Aspect on a zone, an item, or anything else. Doing so grants you one of the following benefits:

- +2 bonus on your test
- Reroll your dice
- Create a Block (pg. 134)
- Make a Declaration (pg. 117)

For example, you could spend a Fate Point to invoke your *Big Dumb Ox* Aspect, granting you a bonus on an Athletics test. Likewise, you could spend an FP to invoke "Soon this city will be mine!" and gain a bonus on just about any action that directly relates to your attempt to take over the city.

In addition to bonuses to rolls, you may also invoke an Aspect to create a Block that forces a foe to deal with an obstacle created by the Aspect. These Blocks usually have a Potency of 2, but may be higher if the GM feels it would be especially effective or appropriate to the situation.

You may also invoke an Aspect to make a Declaration, gaining some measure of direct narrative control. In essence, you get to sit in the GM seat for a moment and describe events that relate to your Aspect.

For example, you may spend a Fate Point to invoke Trained by Corporal Frank Sheppard upon meeting a fellow soldier to Declare that this soldier also served under Corporal Sheppard, and that you two know each other.

Keep in mind that Declarations must be approved by the GM before they are considered official.

Sample Aspect Invocation:
Captain of Charlie Company

[Bonus/Reroll] Gain +2 bonus Effort (or reroll) on rolls to avoid running out of ammo due to your firing discipline training.

[Bonus/Reroll] Gain +2 bonus Effort (or reroll) on rolls to lead men who are in distress.

[Declaration] Charlie Company's recent successes get you the attention of a high-ranking general.

[Block] Force enemies to overcome the Block to attack you because your men are trying to protect you.

Invoking for Free

Any Aspect intentionally created as a result of a character's actions can be invoked (or compelled) for free the first time. This includes those created by performing a Maneuver (pg. 115), forcing an enemy to suffer a Consequence (pg. 120), or generating Spin (pg. 106). It doesn't matter who created the Aspect; the first person to invoke or compel it gets to do so without spending a Fate Point.

Wording vs. Intent

When a character takes an Aspect, he generally has some specific intent in mind for how it will be used. For example, a character who takes the Surgeon at 300 Yards Aspect to demonstrate how good a sniper he is, should not be able to invoke that Aspect when trying to grant medical attention to an ally. Just because the Aspect contains the word "surgeon" doesn't mean the character knows anything about real surgery.

The only way he knows how to open a heart is with a high-powered rifle.

Compelling an Aspect

(Earning More Fate Points)

Aspects aren't always used to grant you benefits, bonuses, and narrative privileges; sometimes they can get you into trouble—this is a good thing!

The effect of a compel is pretty much the exact opposite of invoking an Aspect. Instead of spending a Fate Point to invoke your Aspect for a benefit, you gain a Fate Point in exchange for suffering in a way that relates to an Aspect. When you are compelled, the person offering the compel chooses which of the negative effects listed below you must suffer.

- -2 penalty on your test
- Forced to reroll your dice
- Suffer a Block (pg. 134)
- Suffer a Declaration (pg. 117)

If you do not wish to suffer the effect of the compel, you may pay a Fate Point to decline. You should strongly consider accepting, though, even if it seems like a bad idea. Not only does accepting the compel net you a Fate Point, but it also tends to push your character's story in interesting directions.

Regardless of which of the four options you are forced to endure, compels tend to come about in one of two ways: actively or passively.

Active Compels

Active compels are offered directly by the GM or another character. For example, the GM may offer you a Fate Point to compel your *Big Dumb Ox* Aspect when you are in a situation where quick thinking is a must.

Let's say the character is on the run from Centurions and decides he is going to try to outrun them in his getaway car. As the character is rushing to the car, the GM holds up a token representing a Fate Point. He informs the player that because he is a "dumb ox," he has forgotten the keys back at the bar.

The player can either choose to accept the Fate Point and agree that his character forgot his keys, or pay a Fate Point to decline and continue with his intended course of action.

When the player is compelled by the GM, the GM simply grants the FP to the accepting character. He has an endless pool of FPs to distribute in this way.

If the compel is offered by another character, and it is accepted, that character must give his FP to the character being compelled.

In any case, Fate Points paid to decline a compel simply leave play. Nobody gets them.

The details of a compel are up to the GM or player offering it. But regardless of the specifics, the GM must agree that it is suitable and that the effect(s) are worth the Fate Point.

Passive Compels

Passive compels occur when an Aspect results in trouble for a character during the normal course of play, with no formal offering of the compel ever taking place. In this case, if the character has truly suffered some sort of setback or complication, the GM should hand him a Fate Point for his troubles.

For example, a character may have an Aspect called *Short Tempered and Itchy Triggered*. This Aspect implies that the character is quick to anger and prone to settling disputes with violence. This is a defining trait of the character, and the player should describe his character's actions accordingly.

So when the character loses his temper, starts a fight, and gets in trouble, the GM should consider throwing him an FP.

Essentially, any time a character suffers a penalty, complication, or setback because of an Aspect, either by actively accepting a compel or through the natural course of play, he should be rewarded with a Fate Point.

Sample Aspect Compulsion:
Captain of Charlie Company

[Declaration] While on guard duty, your friend puts his hand on you. Surprised, you punch him before realizing who it is, forcing him to take a Consequence.

[Penalty] The general you just met remembers a time you disobeyed orders and calls you out in front of everyone, causing you to suffer a -2 penalty (or reroll) on a Persuasion test later when talking with your men.

[Declaration] Now an outlaw, the Coalition can use your military records to better track you down.

[Penalty] During a firefight, you have a flashback to a previous conflict that distracts you, forcing you to suffer a -2 penalty (or reroll) on a defense test.

Soft Compels

Sometimes an opportunity to offer a compel pops up, but doesn't seem important or interesting enough to warrant charging the player a Fate Point to decline.

These compels are called soft compels, and work like any other compel except that the recipient can reject it for free.

Certain groups may feel that the standard method of charging for compels is too harsh. If that's the case with your group, consider using only soft compels. So long as the players are still accepting compels fairly regularly, this shouldn't be a problem.

Persistent Aspects should never be handled as soft compels. You should always have to pay a Fate Point to decline a compel from a Persistent Aspect.

See page 113 for more on Persistent Aspects.

Invocation Justification and Abuse

When an Aspect is invoked or compelled, it needs to make sense to all involved. It's easy to justify invoking an Aspect like *Built for Long Distances* on a test to run a long distance, but not so much if the Aspect you want to invoke is Top of the Line Cyber-Eyes.

When requiring a player to justify the use of an Aspect, require them to use the **Therefore Rule**.

The Therefore Rule is simple: Describe the link between your Aspect and your intent using only one "therefore."

If you can't get from the Aspect to the proposed use of it without having to infer ancillary details, it doesn't work. To put it another way, the player must justify how to get from A to B, not A to D via an inferred B and C.

That way lies madness.

Example of Good Justification

"I have the Aspect Grew up in the Slums of Olympus, *therefore, I know how to deal with the lower class and will invoke my Aspect for a +2 on this Diplomacy test to befriend the bum."*

That's fine. You were a part of that sort of society, so you know how to socialize with that sort of person.

Example of Bad Justification

"I have the Aspect Grew up in the Slums of Olympus, *therefore, I got in a lot of fights, therefore, I'm invoking this Aspect for a +2 on my Melee test to attack my target."*

That's not. Just because you grew up in the slums doesn't necessarily mean you got in a lot of fights.

Invoking or Compelling External Aspects

Many things can have Aspects. The PCs have Aspects, the other characters have Aspects, even their equipment and the scene itself can have Aspects. Players and NPCs can use their Fate Points to invoke (or compel!) Aspects belonging to other people, places, and things. This works a lot like invoking or compelling your own Aspects, except the Aspect doesn't belong to you.

As a rule of thumb, invoking or compelling another person's or thing's Aspects requires a little more justification than invoking one of your own Aspects. For Aspects related to the environment, the justification should be some way to really bring in the visuals or theme that the Aspect suggests. For Aspects belonging to opponents, the player needs to know about the Aspect in the first place and then play to it.

Keep in mind that a single Aspect may only be invoked or compelled by the same character once per turn. A player could not, for example, invoke the same Aspect to both gain a bonus to attacking an enemy and compel the enemy to suffer a penalty when defending.

Regardless of where it came from, any time an Aspect is invoked for a bonus, reroll, Block, or Declaration, the person who invoked it must pay the Fate Point.

Similarly, any time you are offered a compel from any Aspect, you gain a Fate Point if you accept.

If an NPC declines a compel, the GM loses a Fate Point on behalf of the guard from his FP pool (pg. 253).

Examples of Invoking External Aspects

Foggy – During a chase, you duck into a fog bank to lose your pursuers, invoking the Foggy Aspect for a +2 bonus (or reroll) on your test to hide. This costs you a Fate Point to invoke, which leaves play.

Small – You have a weapon that is Small. You invoke it to give yourself a +2 bonus (or reroll) when attacking an enemy in very close quarters. This costs you a Fate Point to invoke, which leaves play.

Slick Ride – Trying to attract a date for the night, you pull up to the curb in your Slick Ride, invoking that Aspect to Declare that one of the pretty young ladies nearby really digs your skiff. This costs you a Fate Point to invoke, which leaves play.

Map of the Complex – You have used the Software Engineering Skill with the data collected to create a map of the facility. You invoke it to give yourself a +2 bonus (or reroll) on tests to escape an exploding factory. This costs you a Fate Point to invoke, which leaves play.

Examples of Compelling Other Aspects

Drowsy – You compel this Aspect to Declare that the drowsy guard falls asleep. This costs you a Fate Point to compel. If the GM accepts, he adds a Fate Point to his pool and the guard falls asleep.

Off-Balance – After having Off-Balance placed on him by an ally's successful Maneuver, you compel that Aspect to cause your foe to suffer a -2 (or reroll) on his test to defend against your attempt to push him into the adjacent zone. This costs you a Fate Point to compel. If your foe accepts, the GM adds a Fate Point to his pool and your foe suffers the penalty (or reroll).

Poor Quality – After an enemy attacks and rolls poorly, you compel this Aspect and Declare that your foe's old rusty gun jams on the next shot. This costs you a Fate Point to compel. If your foe accepts, then the GM adds a Fate Point to his pool and the gun jams.

No Pain, No Gain

As a GM, you always want to avoid awarding a Fate Point for a compel prematurely. In general, you don't want to hand a Fate Point over until the Aspect actually impacts the player.

Something can always happen between the time the compel is agreed upon and the point that the effects of the compel actually impact the character. Always make sure the character has earned that Fate Point before handing it over; don't just award the FP because a player is playing to his Aspects.

If the compel didn't really hurt him, he didn't really earn it.

Persistent Aspects

The GM might decide an Aspect is **Persistent (P)** if it is a major component of a person, place, or thing; and has an effect that is almost impossible to ignore or get around. For example, a floor covered in a light dusting of snow might be *Slippery*, but if the room is covered in a fine sheet of ice and you can't walk on it without slipping, the zone Aspect might instead be *Covered in Ice!(P)*. If it is really slippery, it may have both the *Slippery* and *Covered in Ice!(P)* Aspects.

The two Aspects work in much the same way, and both can be invoked or compelled for a bonus/penalty, reroll, Block, or Declaration. However, when invoking or compelling the *Covered in Ice!(P)* Aspect for a bonus/penalty or reroll, you need not spend a Fate Point. You need only to declare that you are invoking it.

Persistent Aspects work like normal Aspects whenever they are invoked or compelled for a Block or Declaration. The bonus/penalty or reroll is free, but you still have to pay to set up a Block or directly influence the story in this manner. If you accept a compel in the form of a Block or Declaration, you get the Fate Point.

When using a regular and Persistent Aspect with similar meanings, as in the case above where a room has both a regular Aspect: Slippery and a Persistent Aspect: *Covered in Ice!(P)*, you would only need to pay one FP to invoke or compel both Aspects for a +4 bonus/-4 penalty, two rerolls, or a combination of a bonus/penalty and one reroll.

Unlike standard Aspects, you do not gain Fate Points when a Persistent Aspect is compelled. Also, to refuse a compel on a Persistent Aspect always costs a Fate Point. Persistent Aspects should never be used for a soft compel (pg. 111).

Note that Severe(P) and Extreme(P) Consequences are also Persistent, and work the same way as Persistent Aspects.

Temporary and Lasting Aspects

Aspects that arise in play or are created by Maneuvers (pg. 115) are usually temporary. Depending on the Aspect and the circumstances, Temporary Aspects may last only a round or until the end of the scene.

This time frame is generally the GM's judgment call, and mostly relies on common sense. A room made *Dark* by cutting out the lights loses that Aspect when the lights come back on.

Sometimes a character may have an Aspect applied to him, such as *Covered in Goo* when splattered with reactor coolant, or *Dazed* when suddenly flashed with bright lights. In these cases, the GM can allow the character to spend a round performing a Skill test (usually Diff: 2) to remove this Aspect.

While most Temporary Aspects only last a short while, some Temporary Aspects, called Lasting Aspects, can hang around for much longer. **Lasting Aspects** tend to describe certain features of a place or a character's relationship to someone or something else. Examples include *"Never show your face on Luna again!"* or *Deep in Debt to Mother Bree*.

The latter would be an example of going into debt (pg. 141), and would be compelled when making purchases using Assets. Deeper debt might be described using a Persistent Aspect!

Lasting Aspects like these should be recorded on the affected character's character sheet, and remain until the situation that caused them is resolved.

Of course, the GM may place a Lasting Aspect on a character as a reward of sorts. An example of such an Aspect might be *Hero of Rho* or *"We hit the jackpot!"*

Jazzing it up

Aspects are one of the major sources of flavor for your character and they're the first thing a GM will look at on your sheet when trying to work out what sort of stories to throw you into. An Aspect is a subtle yet powerful request, and the best part is that you are in total control of it based on the words you choose for it.

Whenever you're writing down the name of an Aspect, ask yourself: "How much flavor does this Aspect suggest?" If it seems fairly colorless, it's time to kick it up a notch.

For a few "good – better – best" ideas…

Cold	**Hot**	**NOVA!**
Smart	*Smart as a Whip*	*Honored Graduate of Helios Academy*
Outlaw	*Apostate Pirate*	*Tsarya's Most Wanted*
Savant	*Mythic Code Slinger*	*Tech-Shaman of Charon*

In each of these cases, the "cold" option certainly suggests its uses, but it's too generic and doesn't really jump off the page in a way that suggests story ideas. The "hot" option is certainly better by way of being more specific; both GM and player can see some potential story hooks in these and differentiate them from their blander predecessors.

The "NOVA!" options are where it's at, though. It's easy to read those and instantly get an idea of who a character is, where he is from, and/or what others might think of him.

Getting on the Same Page…

You may have noticed that, so far, we're using a lot of space to talk about how your Aspects communicate things about your character to the GM. We mean it. Out of all the things in the game, Aspects are probably the clearest message you can send to the GM about what you want from the game—short of walking right up to the GM and saying so.

Once you've picked all the Aspects for your character, take a step back and look at them as a whole. Ask yourself if they represent your character the way you'd want them to; if they don't, change them!

By themselves, Aspects can't say it all, and it's important to remember that. Short of making each Aspect a paragraph or essay, you're dealing with a few short, catchy phrases and names here. Aspects need to be reasonably short so that you can talk about them casually without running out of breath. However, the brevity of an Aspect's name means some things are left unspoken, so take some time with the GM to speak these unspoken things when you can.

Both the player and the GM should look at an Aspect not as the end of an idea but the start of one. You're both going to bring your own ideas of what the Aspect means to the table and—at least to some extent—you're both right. Usually this works out fine; the combined perspectives make the whole greater than the sum, but sometimes the GM and the player will have radically different ideas of what the Aspect entails. Be clear with one another and iron out any potential differences, ideally before the Fate Points start flying.

Maneuvers

(Creating an Aspect)

A **Maneuver** is an action taken to affect the environment, other people, or even yourself in a way that creates a Temporary Aspect. When a character flashes a bright light in an enemy's eyes to place a temporary Blinded Aspect on him, or counts to ten and takes a deep breath to place a temporary Focused Aspect on himself—those are Maneuvers.

To clarify, Actions are the normal things a character can do in a round. A Maneuver is a special type of action that is taken specifically to create Temporary Aspects.

A Maneuver is performed as a Simple Action, as either a test or contest, with the difficulty determined by the nature of the Maneuver. In some cases, if the difficulty is 0, the GM may let you perform a Maneuver as a Supplemental Action or by combining Skills (pg. 105).

For example, a character taking a moment to relax to place the *Focused* Aspect on himself might be required to make a Cohesion test (Diff: 2).

Alternatively, he might spend a few minutes working with his Agent, constructing a Program to better monitor the power distribution of a ship's reactor. This test would use Software Engineering and would create a Power Optimization Program Aspect that might help if the ship's power system is targeted by another ship's cyber-warfare suite.

Zone- and scene-altering Maneuvers allow you to place some kind of Temporary Aspect over a targeted zone or the entire scene, potentially affecting everyone taking part in it. How hard this is to do can range from trivial with no Skill test (usually allowed as a Supplemental Action) to virtually impossible. It very much depends on what the character is attempting to achieve and what the circumstances are.

If the target is another character, the Maneuvering character and the target take part in a contest using whatever Skills the GM deems appropriate.

A character might try to perform a Maneuver to slam into someone, thus placing the *Staggered* Aspect on the victim. Performing this would require an Athletics contest. If successful, the resulting Temporary Aspect may then be invoked or compelled for a bonus on a subsequent test.

The first invocation or compulsion doesn't cost the player a Fate Point, even if they weren't the one to create the Aspect. This allows teams to work together, with some members of the team performing Maneuvers and the others taking advantage of the Aspects they create.

If you generate Spin on a test to perform a Maneuver, the resulting Aspect can be invoked or compelled for free twice.

Aspect Duration

The amount of time an Aspect lasts often depends on how many Shifts you generate when creating it.

If you succeed, but generate 0 Shifts, the Aspect will be very temporary or weak, and will probably go away the first time it is invoked or compelled.

If you succeed with more than 1 Shift, the Aspect will last the duration of the scene or until an action is taken to remove it. Removal is usually automatic if the affected character devotes a Simple Action to removing the Aspect. Alternatively, the character can attempt to remove the Aspect as a Supplemental Action if they can succeed on a relevant Skill test (Diff: 2).

Depending on the circumstances and the Aspect created, an Aspect may last longer or be harder to remove. As always, this is the GM's call.

Assessments

(Revealing an Aspect)

Skills can sometimes be used in careful **Assessment** of a person, place, or thing before taking any sort of action. This Assessment might be made while putting together a plan, or while simply observing the target for long enough to learn something that would give a critical advantage. Assessing most often uses the Perception Skill, but you can also use Insight (to deduce logical outcomes, notice patterns, or get a sense of how a character is feeling) or more specialized Skills such as Strategy or Engineering when Assessing relevant subjects.

Here, the Skill is not used to place an Aspect so much as to discover an existing one. The character observes the subject for at least a round, then makes a test using the relevant Skill.

If successful, the GM reveals (or makes up) a relevant Aspect about the subject. As usual, the first time this newly discovered Aspect is invoked or compelled, it can be done so for free.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ 17:20-04,05,97]

[Reagan] – What did your find out?

[Anders] – Uncer is just a runner. He's a low man in the organization and probably doesn't know anything useful.

[Reagan] – I guess we'll find out. Jane is en route to intercept him.

[Anders] – Poor bastard.

Setting Assessment Difficulties

If the target of an Assessment is a person or a group, the Assessment is usually resolved with a contest (generally Insight vs. Guile). Static entities like locations or objects typically have difficulties set by the GM. If there's no obvious way to determine the Assessment difficulty, consider the baseline difficulty to be 2.

Performing an Assessment in the middle of a conflict generally requires no fewer than 3 rounds, but the GM may allow the character to reduce the amount of time required (minimum one round) by accepting a penalty on his Skill test equal to the number of rounds she wishes to remove from the required time. Thus, performing an Assessment in one round suffers a -2 penalty.

Outside of a conflict, performing an Assessment takes just a few seconds to a minute. But by increasing the Assessment time to an hour, the character can gain a +2 bonus on the Skill test; if the character spends four hours she can get a +3 bonus.

At the GM's discretion, if a character generates Spin on an Assessment test, he may gain insight into a more potent fact or discover one additional Aspect.

For example, Jacob has been planning a heist job for a while now. Now, with all the pieces in play, he finds himself sitting across the street giving the apostate bank one last look before going in.

He decides to spend this time trying to Assess the location. Given Jacob's current position, overlooking a crowded area, the GM sets a difficulty of 3 and a minimum time of 3 turns.

Jacob spends 3 hours sitting there, electing to spend hours instead of rounds for a +2 bonus, and then rolls his Perception Skill. He generates a total Effort of 4. The GM tells him that the bank seems to be popular among local med-center employees, as he sees a lot of people in scrubs going in and out.

Thus, the GM informs Jacob's player that the bank has an Aspect called *Popular with the Scrubs*. Should Jacob find a way to invoke this Aspect, for instance by dressing in scrubs to blend in during the getaway, he may spend a Fate Point to invoke that Aspect for some benefit. Since he's the first person to use that Aspect, he'd get to do so for free if he acts quickly.

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Declarations

(Declaring a Story Element or Aspect)

Declarations allow characters to place new Aspects on a subject, Declare some fact about it, or Declare that they took some past "off-screen" action in preparation for current challenges. This can be done by invoking Aspects or performing Skill tests.

Invoking to Create Story Elements or New Aspects

Any time a character invokes or compels an Aspect, instead of gaining a +2 bonus or reroll, he may choose to Declare some fact about the a person, place, or thing in the setting.

As a general rule, the effect of this sort of Declaration should not involve game mechanics. Instead, it should be used as a tool to allow the players to help create the world, filling out details about the setting.

On the other hand, a Declaration can also be used to achieve a more direct result, either by placing an Aspect on the subject or simply Declaring that something happens to it.

In all cases, Declarations are subject to GM veto. If a player tries to Declare a fact or Aspect that the GM has already decided isn't true or would hurt the direction of the story, he should feel free to reject it.

Often, Declarations are a useful mechanism for moving a story along. In particular, if you find yourself in a conflict scene that is starting to drag, you can allow a Declaration to be used to quickly shift the focus of conflict, or simply remove unimportant mooks (pg. 253) from the fight.

Just remember, a Declaration is much more likely to be accepted by the GM when it makes the game fun for everyone. A good Declaration builds drama, suspense, mystery, and reinforces the themes of the setting.

Examples of Declarations by Invoking Aspects

[Invocation] When combing a social event in search of clues, you invoke your *Darling of House Dalianis* Aspect to Declare that the host is an ally of House Dalianis and owes a favor.

If the GM accepts, he takes your offered FP and the host agrees to meet with your character in private for a moment.

[Invocation] When falling off the side of a building, you invoke the area's *Heavy Traffic* Aspect to Declare that you land on the hood of a car hovering below instead of plummeting to your death.

If the GM accepts, he takes your offered FP and agrees that there was indeed a car passing by below you, saving your life.

[Invocation] Slipping through the hallways of the House manor, you come upon a previously unknown ARIS strip between yourself and the vault door. You invoke your *The Cat of Argos* Aspect to Declare that you turned on your light screen augment just as you rounded the corner (even though you said earlier that you weren't using it, and hadn't activated it).

If the GM accepts, he takes your offered FP and agrees that you switched it on just in time, and that the strip never saw you.

[Compulsion] After taking a direct hit from your coil gun, your enemy staggers backwards, suffering a Physical Consequence of *Dazed and Bloodied*. You compel his *Dazed and Bloodied* Consequence and Declare that he stumbles out into traffic.

If the GM accepts, your foe takes your offered FP and (being a mook) is killed as an oncoming ground car smashes into him.

[Compulsion] Watching the hallway for passing security while your crew member plants a bomb, you suddenly hear the sound of a PAc weapon discharge from above. The GM compels your *Survivor of Deacon's Corridor* Aspect to Declare that you are suddenly panic stricken, and must seek cover.

If you accept, you gain a Fate Point and must leave your ally in search of a safe place to take cover.

Skill Tests to Create Story Elements or New Aspects

It's also possible to use Skills that represent knowledge of certain topics to perform a Declaration.

For example, you might use Research to place an Aspect of *Mostly Home to Apostates* on a colony you are about to visit.

This works the same as invoking an Aspect to make a Declaration, but relies on a Skill test instead.

The GM is encouraged to use creativity as his primary guideline when determining the Skill test difficulty to make a Declaration. The default difficulty is 2, but attempts to Declare creative and entertaining Aspects or facts should be more likely to succeed than boring Aspects or facts. Ideas that would disrupt the game, or are just plain unreasonable, should simply be vetoed.

Keep it Narrative

It is highly recommended that you avoid the temptation to mix Declarations with game mechanics. Declarations are storytelling mechanics, and as a general rule, shouldn't be used to affect the game's rules.

In a conflict, for example, a Declaration may be used to grant an extra action, instantly defeat an opponent, render an opponent helpless, and so on.

However, a player shouldn't Declare things like an attack only causing half the normal stress it should cause, or that a character gains a +4 bonus to his Armor Rating.

In all cases, Declarations should be used to simplify a conflict by resolving actions outside of the need for rolling dice. Using them to create little rule adjustments on the spot serves only to make things more complex.

Any mention of numbers or fractions should be an immediate red flag that a Declaration isn't being used properly.

Example of Play

Mike (*GM*): Security has been alerted. From what you've already learned, you can expect the building to be flooded with House Tsarya enforcers pretty quickly.

Leland (*Reagan*): We need an exit.

Krissy (*Jane*): An exit? Let's just fight our way to the basement parking garage.

Kyle (*Anders*): How about the roof?

Wes (*Alexei*): The enforcers might use the roof to get in. Let me execute Oracle Patterning and check. [Performs a SINC test to activate and gets an Effort of 2. The execution difficulty is 4, so he suffers 2 points of system stress, but the Savant Program still executes.]

Mike (*GM*): What'd you get?

Wes (*Alexei*): Failed by 2. Not taking a Consequence yet. Oracle Patterning still executes.

Mike (*GM*): Okay. Your Daemon launches a barrage of attacks against the local mesh, scouring it and the Extranet for any reports of enforcer activity that might tell you how these guys work. Collating this data, it tells you that you can expect that around a dozen enforcers will try to secure the building from the ground up.

Wes (*Alexei*): I share this with everyone.

Krissy (*Jane*): Then up we go.

Leland (*Reagan*): We don't know what's on the roof, or even if we have a way to get clear once we get up there.

Rob (*Malpheus*): I'll ghost ahead to the top floor to make sure it's clear.

Leland (*Reagan*): Be sure to map as you go, it might come in handy.

Mike (*GM*): Let's handle that as a Maneuver. Malpheus, make a Software Engineering test to produce a good map. Difficulty is 2. If you succeed, you'll produce a *Map of the Building* Aspect. That might come in handy later.

Rob (*Malpheus*): [Rolls dice] 3. Success.

---------- *a little later* ----------

Mike (*GM*): Malpheus was able to ghost to the roof and get a look around. Fortunately, he wasn't detected.

Leland (*Reagan*): What floor are we on?

Mike (*GM*): The top. Seventeenth.

Rob (*Malpheus*): I transmit the map data to everyone and bring it up as an ARO of the building, visible as a floating 3D wireframe.

Here's the situation, gentlemen. I highlight the last known location of the remaining security guards, showing them as glowing red orbs.

There are three of them, all armored and carrying PAc assault rifles.

Krissy (*Jane*): You boys ready to get your hands dirty?

Rob (*Malpheus*): Deploy my drone.

Kyle (*Anders*): Drone deployed. So we're just going to kick open the rooftop access door and go out guns blazing?

Krissy (*Jane*): Yep!

Leland (*Reagan*): Nope. I want to make an Assessment of the roof.

Mike (*GM*): Not being able to see the roof, you're going to have to put together what few facts you have about it and the surrounding area. Make an Insight test.

Leland (*Reagan*): [Rolls dice] I got a total Effort of 3.

Mike (*GM*): From what you know about the city of Rho, you know the roof is going to have an Aspect of *High Winds*.

Kyle (*Anders*): I used to be an enforcer for the Rings of Olympus. And I figure the House Tsarya enforcers that are coming up from the ground level are similar to the guys I worked for.

I want to invoke my *Former Enforcer for the Rings of Olympus* Aspect to make a Declaration. They are going to want to clear and secure the streets before entering the building. That should take a while. [Offers GM an FP]

Mike (*GM*): [Takes the Fate Point] That seems reasonable. You guys ready?

CONFLICT AND CONSEQUENCES

The Basics of Conflict

No matter what sort of conflict you are involved in, the basics of the system are essentially the same.

An attack test is a Simple Action.

The defender's defense test is a special sort of Instant Action that does not count against the total number of Instant Actions that you may normally perform in a round (usually just one).

The Skills used to attack and defend depend on the type of conflict. When making an attack, you make an attack test using a skill appropriate to the type of attack you are making. The defender makes a defense test using an appropriate Skill to defend with. The defender's Effort sets the difficulty for the attack test. The defender suffers an amount of stress equal to the number of Shifts the attacker generated.

Physical attacks generate **physical stress** and **mental attacks** generate mental stress. Characters have a set of stress boxes for each of these types of stress. When the character suffers stress, he checks off a number of stress boxes, left to right, equal to the amount of stress suffered.

So if he suffers 1 point of stress, he checks one box. If he then suffers 2 more, he checks off two more, for a total of three.

If his **Stress Track** is ever filled up, the character is **Taken Out**.

When attacked in a physical conflict with a weapon, on a hit the weapon's **Weapon Rating (WR)** (pg. 194) is added to the amount of stress inflicted. Similarly, if you are wearing armor, the amount of stress suffered is reduced by your armor's **Armor Rating (AR)** (pg. 194). An explosive's **Explosive Rating (ExR)** (pg. 194) is added directly to the attack test rather than just to the stress inflicted.

In a mental conflict, an attack's **Edge** (pg. 127) rating is added to the attack test. The target's **Determination** is added to the target's defense test.

Stress Tracks & Consequences

Every character has a Physical and Mental Stress Track. Savants also have a System Stress Track. Each Stress Track consists of a number of stress boxes. To determine how many boxes a character has on each of his Stress Tracks, see pg. 159.

Whenever you are attacked and suffer stress, you can choose to reduce the amount of stress suffered by electing to take a Consequence. You may only elect to take one Consequence per attack, and the type of Consequence you take must relate to the type of attack suffered.

You may only take one Consequence of each type (Mild, Moderate, Severe, or Extreme) per Stress Track.

Type of Consequence	Stress Avoided
Mild	2
Moderate	4
Severe(P)	6
Extreme(P)	8

A Consequence is a special type of Temporary Aspect. As such, it functions in all ways exactly like a normal Aspect, and can be invoked or compelled.

Note, though: The first time a Consequence is invoked or compelled, it is done so for free.

The person taking the Consequence gets to describe what it is, so long as it's compatible with the nature of the attack that inflicted the harm. The GM acts as the final arbitrator on the appropriateness of a Consequence.

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Example of a Physical Attack and Consequence

A Centurion opens fire on Destiny with his assault rifle. He has an attack Effort of 5. Destiny makes a Perception Skill test to defend, but doesn't generate enough Effort. The Centurion hits. He adds his Weapon Rating to the amount of stress he inflicts, and Destiny reduces the total amount of stress suffered by her Armor Rating. However, she still suffers some stress, and elects to take a Mild Consequence.

The rifle fire cuts through her armored sleeve and grazes her inner bicep as she speeds around the corner to safety.

Destiny's player writes Just a Flesh Wound in the spot for her Mild Consequence.

She continues down the hall, and hears the footsteps of the Sentinel behind her. She turns to fire back at him.

She makes a Firearms Skill test, comparing it to the Centurion's defense Effort. However, the Centurion decides to compel Destiny's Just a Flesh Wound Consequence this time (for free since it's the first time), forcing her to suffer a -2 penalty on her attack. Her arm must be getting shaky from the pain of the wound.

Concessions

Any time a character takes a Consequence, he also has the option of offering a **Concession** instead. A Concession that is accepted absorbs all stress inflicted by the attack, and is essentially equivalent to surrendering. Short of fleeing, it is the best way to end a conflict before someone is Taken Out.

The character inflicting the stress can always opt to reject the Concession, but doing so is a clear indication that the fight will be a bloody one, literally or metaphorically. If the GM declares that the Concession was a reasonable offer, then the character that offered it gains one Fate Point, and the character that refused it loses one.

The player who wishes to Concede must first outline the parameters of the Concession, clearly identifying what will happen to his character. This process may require some negotiation between the player(s) and the GM. If the Concession is accepted, the conceding character must immediately take the actions he outlined in the Concession.

Many conflicts end with a Concession when one party simply does not want to risk taking Severe(P) or Extreme(P) Consequences as a result of the conflict, or when neither party wants to risk being Taken Out.

A Concession may consist of a character literally laying down his weapon and begging for his life, or maybe he works out a deal with his opponent during the conflict. In a mental conflict, the Concession may be a course of action such as giving in to your enemy's demands or changing your position on an issue.

However, a Concession can also be an out-of-character deal struck between players, or the player and the GM. These sorts of arrangements tend to fall into one of two categories:

Turning Point: This sort of Concession impacts the character's life in some profound way, often represented by swapping one Aspect for another or temporarily losing a Stunt.

[NetLink Log: 16:32-09,03,99]

[Grady] – I'm thinking about taking the offer and getting an Ingot sleeve.

[Juna] – You're going to resleeve?

[Grady] – Thinking about it. Since the Ingot was certified as mining gear, the House will provide the sleeve and I get a bump.

[Juna] – Didn't you just get that sleeve a few months ago? Aren't you worried about fragmenting?

[Grady] – Nah. Besides. The offer is too good to pass up.

Examples of these sorts of Aspects might be the death of a close friend, shifting of allegiances, political exile, or a profound crisis of faith.

Distress Consequence: When taking this sort of Concession, the player elects to suffer an Extreme Consequence on another Stress Track. An example of this might be taking an Extreme Mental Consequence in response to a physical attack to represent shock or severe post-traumatic stress.

Recovering Stress & Consequences

All stress boxes, which represent fatigue, minor cuts and scrapes, moments of panic, embarrassment, system glitches, and so on, are automatically cleared with a few minutes of rest at the end of a conflict scene.

Consequences will recover as well, but take more time. The flesh mends, people forget, and even synthetic systems are outfitted with self-healing nanofibers and micro-composites.

With aid (pg. 123), they heal even more quickly.

Consequences (except the Extreme(P) Consequence) automatically disappear after a certain amount of time. Different types of Consequences take longer to go away than others. See the table below:

Consequence Recovery Times

Consequence	Physical/System	Mental
Mild	1 hour	1 day
Moderate	1 day	1 week
Severe(P)	1 week	1 month
Extreme(P)	Special	Special

At the end of the recovery time, the Consequence downgrades to the next lesser type. For example, if you have a Severe(P) Physical Consequence, after one week it becomes a Moderate Consequence.

The Consequence should be reworded to something more appropriate to its new type. For example, a Severe Consequence of *Bullet Hole in Leg* could change to a Moderate Consequence of *Recovering Bullet Wound*.

If a Consequence downgrades to a type you already have, that Consequence automatically downgrades as well. For example, if you downgrade a Severe Consequence to a Moderate Consequence, but you already have a Moderate Consequence, your Moderate Consequence automatically downgrades to a Mild Consequence, and so on.

Extreme Consequences

Unlike other Consequences, Extreme Consequences never automatically downgrade. Instead, after the allotted time has passed, the Extreme Consequence becomes an Aspect.

This new Aspect should be denoted with an "(E)" after it. You may only ever have one of these Aspects of the same type (physical, mental, etc.) at a time. If you already have one, another cannot take its place until the first is removed. In that case, an Extreme Consequence will never clear until the first Aspect is removed and the new Consequence can take its place.

You may remove an Aspect gained from suffering an Extreme Consequence after achieving your next Milestone after the one you are currently working to achieve. Alternatively, at any time you may elect to replace one of your existing Aspects with it, making it a normal permanent character Aspect.

Aspects of this type may still be removed by resleeving, limb replacement, or other methods. There are no specific rules to cover this. If a Consequence states that an arm has been severed, purchasing the nanocybernetic limb replacement augmentation simply removes the Consequence.

Medical technology in the Nova Praxis setting is very powerful. Very nearly anything can be healed, cured, or replaced. For characters with a mnemonic core, even death can be overcome.

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Taken Out

If all of your stress boxes become filled, you are Taken Out. When you are Taken Out, the person who def-eated you gets to describe what that means. He might describe it as your character dying, becoming crippled, or however else he chooses to remove you from the conflict in a way that makes sense given the method used to take you out.

The player being Taken Out gets the option to cash in all of his Fate Points (you must have at least 1) to force the person responsible for taking him out to describe his defeat in a different way. Being Taken Out should always result in your being removed from the conflict and suffering some loss.

For example, instead of being shot in the head, your enemy might hit a critical component of your ship. This might result in an explosive decompression that both destroys your ship and sends you hurtling into space.

Recovery Facilities

Time in a hospital, systems lab, or with a psychiatrist can help you recover Consequences more quickly. Hospitals and labs use an array of cutting edge technology, such as medi-stimulant baths, medichine injections, cloned organs, and so on. Psychiatric help can come in the form of regular therapy, hypnosis, or even mnemonic editing for those who have undergone Apotheosis.

The chart below shows the amount of time required to downgrade a Consequence, and the Cost associated.

Consequence	Physical/System	Mental	Cost
Mild	5 minutes	1 hour	3
Moderate	1 hour	1 day	4
Severe	1 day	1 week	5
Extreme	1 week	1 month	6

Emergency Aid

Characters with the proper Skills and access to the necessary equipment can attempt to speed up the recovery process. This isn't generally as good as a trip to a dedicated care facility, but it's often better than nothing.

Basic aid can remove a Mild Consequence from yourself or another character. To do this, the person providing the aid must be able to spend at least 10 minutes with the patient, have the tools needed, and succeed on a Skill test (Diff: 2).

The Skill required is listed below:

Physical Consequence: Education or Engineering (Hardware) for Cybersleeves
System Consequence: Engineering (Either)
Mental Consequence: Insight or Mnemonics

Note: Mnemonics is only an option for Apotheosized characters.

RUNNING CONFLICTS

Before a conflict begins, the GM should follow these simple steps:

1. Frame the Scene

Before the conflict begins, you will want to give the players an accurate description of the surrounding area. You may call for Perception checks if there are hidden NPCs, clues, or other elements of the environment that may not be immediately obvious.

Describe the area using as many senses as you can. Tell the players what they see and hear, but also try to elaborate on smells and physical sensations when possible. A warehouse is going to smell like dust, and the air might be cool and damp. On the other hand, one of House Silva's bio-research labs might smell acrid and sterile. The lab might be all white and chrome, seemingly bleached of color and emotion.

Wait until last to reveal any obvious threats. Describing potential enemies or environmental dangers first will send the players' minds to thinking about how to deal with them instead of listening to the rest of the scene's description.

2. Reveal Aspects

Over the course of a conflict, elements in play in the scene can affect how the conflict unfolds. The GM should declare any immediately obvious Aspects present in the scene, and lays them out for the players. He might also call for Perception rolls to notice more subtle Aspects.

These Aspects can be invoked or compelled by everyone present in the scene.

3. Determine Zones

After describing the area in detail, the GM should explain how the area breaks down into zones. Zones do not conform to any specific size, but instead separate the environment into its meaningful components. For an average apartment, for example, the zones might be the living room, the foyer, the dining room, kitchen, hallway, and so on.

For complicated areas with many zones, it is recommended that you draw out a zone map for all the players to see.

See page 150 for more on the different types of zones and how they work.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ 19:43-04,15,97]

[Reagan] – Don't blow it yet Jane. Malpheus, what are we looking at?

[Malpheus] – Hallway. 12 m. Empties into a room, 4 x 4. One exit. Locked. Emergency lighting only. One crouched in the south-west corner behind a desk.

[Reagan] – ETA on backup, 7 min

[Reagan] – Jane, pull the charge and plant it on the wall in the south-east corner of the room we just came out of.

[Jane] – Ha! I wish I could see the look on his face when the walls blows. You know, assuming he still has one.

4. Establish Initiative

The order the characters act in is determined at the beginning of the conflict. Each character rolls his Strategy (for physical conflicts) or Insight (for mental conflicts) and adds any relevant modifiers from Stunts or Aspects. Characters act in order of the highest to lowest initiative result. This is referred to as the order of initiative, and is used to determine who takes what action and when.

Once everyone has had their turn, a new round begins and the characters continue to act in the same order.

Ties in initiative are resolved in favor of characters with a higher Perception Skill. Any remaining ties are in favor of the player closest to the GM's right or in favor of the player if the other tied character is an NPC.

5. Begin Exchanges

Once initiative has been established, characters may begin making attack and defense tests as described in the next section.

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Physical Conflict

The Skills used to attack and defend in a physical conflict depend on the type of attack. Here are some common examples:

Intent	Attacking Skill	Defending Skill
Touch	Athletics	Athletics
Unarmed Attack	Melee	Athletics or Endurance
Ranged Attack	Firearms	Perception or Athletics
Melee Attack	Melee	Athletics or Melee
Poison or Disease	Special	Endurance

Weapon and Armor Ratings

If an attack hits, the defender suffers an amount of stress equal to the number of Shifts generated, plus the Weapon Rating (WR) of the attacker's weapon.

If the defender is wearing armor that can help defend against the attack, the amount of stress he suffers is reduced by his armor's Armor Rating (AR).

In the case of explosives, the Explosive Rating (ExR) is added directly to the Effort generated in the attack test instead of only being added in the case of a successful attack.

Physical Consequences

Attacks that cause you to check stress boxes represent the minor bumps, nicks, and scratches of battle. They might sting a bit, but don't hinder the character in a significant way. However, sometimes conflicts will result in lasting wounds—sprained ankles, broken arms, bullet holes, and so on. These are Consequences.

Sample Physical Consequences

Mild	**Severe(P)**	**Taken Out**
Fatigued	*Broken Arm*	*Dead*
Dazed	*Severed Finger*	*Comatose*
Pulled Muscle	*Concussion*	*Quadriplegic*
Moderate	**Extreme(P)**	
Sprained Ankle	*Broken Back*	
Minor Laceration	*Severed Arm*	
Wrenched Back	*Ruptured Organ*	

Physical Movement in a Conflict

On your turn, you may move into a different zone using one of the following options:

Standard Move – You move into an adjacent zone. This is a Free Action, or a Supplemental Action (pg. 105) when negotiating rough or hazardous terrain. If the transition between zones is hampered, say requiring you to climb a ladder, it may cause you to suffer additional penalties on any other actions you perform.

Hustle – If you Hustle, you may move across one zone and into the next. This is a Supplemental Action, and any other action you perform on this turn suffers a -2 penalty in addition to any other penalties you might suffer.

Run – Running works the same as Hustling, but you suffer a -3 penalty and may also make an Athletics test (Diff: 2). You may move one additional zone for each Shift generated by this test.

Note that some scene Aspects may also make it more difficult to move through certain zones. For example, a room filled with debris may have an Aspect of *Debris-Filled*, which when compelled can force the character to suffer a penalty or reroll on rolls to move.

Mental Conflict

A mental attack is any sort of overt attempt to harm or change the mindset of another. While not every conversation need be solved as a mental conflict, attempts to change the perspective of another character in a manner that effects the story in an important way probably should. In most cases, the GM should simply decide whether or not an NPC is persuaded, intimidated, or otherwise without resorting to a mental conflict.

If it might matter to the story whether or not you succeed in manipulating another person, but it isn't worth the time to resolve as a mental conflict, a simple contest usually works.

For example, attempting to flirt with the local sensie celebrity a bit so that he might be more amicable to helping you later might be a simple Guile test vs. the celebrity's Insight to see if he notices the flirtation isn't genuine.

Debates, confrontations, or challenges that serve as critical moments in the campaign are times when the GM might call for a mental conflict. These situations could include negotiating with a Senator for the fate of an apostate enclave or attempting to seduce the chairman's daughter in order to get closer and assassinate him.

Mental conflict uses the same basic conflict resolution system as described in the beginning of this chapter, but instead of fists and weapons, the outcome is decided with words and emotions.

Mental Attacks and Defenses

Mental attacks can come in many forms, but as far as the conflict rules are concerned, they all basically work the same.

During a mental attack, attack and defense tests are made using the appropriate Skills, dealing stress against the defender's Mental Stress Track until the defender Concedes or is Taken Out. Most mental conflicts will end in a Concession that involves the conceding character either giving in to his attacker's demands, changing his opinion on the topic at hand, or withdrawing from the conflict in anger or embarrassment.

Most people aren't willing to argue or dwell on a point of contention until it causes them lasting psychological harm. Thus, getting Taken Out tends to be rare in mental conflict.

While the word "attack" gives the impression of hostility, this need not be the case. A character's attempt to make another fall in love with her could easily be handled as a mental conflict.

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Sample Uses of Mental Conflict

Deception: An attempt to convince another person of your lie. You attack with your Guile and your target defends with his Insight. You continue to attack until the target Concedes and states that he believes you, or you come to some other type of agreement.

Manipulation: An attempt to change another person's outlook on a subject. Make a Diplomacy test against the target's Cohesion, or if the subject matter is dear to him, Resolve. A Concession usually means the target has become convinced.

Seduction: An attempt to manipulate another through temptation may give rise to a mental conflict. Often the seducer will make a Diplomacy test, maybe combined with Guile, while the defender makes a Resolve test, possibly combined with Insight.

Edge and Determination

Edge is the "weapon" used in mental combat. It's a snappy comeback, a potent threat, a horrific sight (see below), some action to punctuate the point, or otherwise. When involved in a mental conflict that takes place in the context of an argument or threat, the player should describe to you what he is saying or doing to his opponent. The more clever or meaningful a player's description, the more Edge the GM should give his attack. The Edge rating may then be applied as a bonus to your attack test.

Another way to gain Edge is to use story elements against the target. For example, when engaging in a mental attack to get a character to surrender, if you have his loved ones at gunpoint you would be rewarded an Edge bonus. While not particularly witty, it really hits the character where it hurts.

Note that, unlike a Weapon Rating, you do not have to first successfully attack before you add in your Edge. It is a bonus applied directly to the attack test itself.

Edge usually has to be used in the turn it was generated, but once used it is gone.

The amount of Edge granted to a character's mental attack is determined by the GM, which he grants based off of how well the player role-plays his character or what actions he has taken to reinforce his position.

Usually the amount ranges from 0 to 5, with 0 being a half-hearted description and 5 being an exceptionally well thought-out response that plays on the target's fears, ambitions, and/or weaknesses.

While attacks with words tend to top out at an Edge rating of around 5, a character can be exposed to horrors that are far more damaging to the mind.

These sorts of events are described in more detail below.

Determination is the opposite of Edge and functions like a sort of armor in a mental conflict. It is the measurement of a character's dedication to his intent. Like Edge, Determination is rated (usually 0 to 5) and grants a bonus on the defender's defense test.

For example, a guard who hates both his job and employer may have a Determination of 0, while a guard who knows his employer will kill him for failure might have a Determination of 4 or 5. Determination could represent morale, or simple fear of what might happen should he give in.

Horror and Shocking Events

Coming into contact with horrific creatures, the trauma of resleeving, exposure to torture, or stumbling upon sanity-crushing crime scenes can result in an attack against the character's mental stress. This attack is handled like any other mental attack, though likely there will not be another person involved to make the attack. Thus, there is no

Sample Mental Consequences

Mild	**Severe(P)**	**Taken Out**
Flushed	*Flashbacks*	*Dead*
Shamed	*Reclusive*	*Catatonic*
Withdrawn	*Psychotic Tendencies*	*Crippling Dementia*
Moderate	**Extreme(P)**	
Trembling	*Mute*	
Unwilling to Speak	*Severe Hallucinations*	
Desire to Lash Out	*Suicidal*	

Skill to add to the attack roll, only an Edge bonus.

The Edge bonus that the GM adds to the attack should reflect the nature of the incident, as well as the experiences of the defending character.

For example, a character's first contact with some bizarre posthuman aberration may result in an attack with a +8 Edge bonus. However, the GM may choose to add no Edge, or may not even make an attack if the character is one of the sole survivors of a metamorphic viral outbreak and has killed dozens of them in the past.

While exposure to monsters can certainly be traumatic, characters will commonly encounter more mundane means of breaking the mind.

Torture is still used throughout the galaxy, and advanced technology enables advanced torture. An ego can be downloaded into a virtuality specifically designed for torture, and can be subjected to it indefinitely. Similarly, a person wearing a cybersleeve left to float through the endless abyss of space will quickly become unhinged.

Exposure to torture can be handled as one mental attack or several spread out over time. A good Edge rating for this sort of thing is 5, with an attack made every torture session or every eight hours.

Mental Consequences

Stress is a transitory thing, but sometimes even non-physical conflicts can have lasting Consequences: an irrational hatred for your attacker, inability to relate to others, lessened ability to control your temper, and so on. As with Physical Consequences, Mental Consequences are a special kind of Aspect that can be compelled or even invoked.

As with other Consequences, the exact nature of the Consequence should depend upon the type of attack one suffers, be it insults, threats, or exposure to some biological experiment turned aberrant horror.

Remember that it doesn't cost a Fate Point to invoke or compel a Consequence for the first time, and that Severe(P) and Extreme(P) Consequences are Persistent.

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System Conflict

System conflict takes place when a character uses a Savant Program to launch an attack against another Savant's systems, but also comes into play whenever a Savant fails a test to execute a Savant Program. (See page 117 for more on execution difficulties.)

This stress destabilizes the Savant's systems, which are already under some amount of strain from running the Savant's SINC.

Modern computers, being Mimir-tech devices, never crash and nearly always run at optimal capacity. However, these systems were never designed to run SINC or to resist cyber-attacks from Savant Programs or CISTs. The onboard AI responsible for handling security and maintaining the integrity of the system gets overloaded, confused, or misdirected by the Savant Program and has difficulty recovering.

In the face of such an assault, mindsets and sleeve systems begin to suffer a number of stability and performance-related problems; whereas SIMs will suffer from errors in their software that comprise them.

System Consequences

As stated before, system stress generally comes from either a dedicated attack from a Savant Program, or a failed use of a Savant Program.

Exposure to, or abusive use of, this sort of software can put undue strain on your mindset and/or sleeve's systems. Pushing your system like this can cause it expend too much power too quickly, drive the processors harder than they were designed to be driven, generate too much heat, corrupt he code that makes up the ego, or perform unreliably due to unstable SINC.

Other characters besides Savants can have their systems damaged as well, but the damage tends to be more localized and temporary. Meaning, attacks they suffer from Savant Programs have other effects besides system stress.

Sample System Consequences

Mild

Minor Lag

Memory Access Error

Running Hot

Moderate

Memory Leak

Data Corruption

Damaged Actuator

Severe(P)

Random Reboots

Connections Severed

Hard Locked

Extreme(P)

System Crash

Catastrophic Data Loss

Unresponsive

Taken Out

Scrapped

Their systems aren't compromised the way a Savant's are. The AI onboard doesn't have to deal with the inherent instability that comes from having to manage the Savant's SINC.

Recovering from System Consequences

It is assumed that characters work to repair any errors or defects in their system during their downtime. Depending on the severity of the Consequence, this may be as simple as a reboot or as complex as disassembly and integration of replacement parts.

Regardless of the specifics, system stress is healed at the same rate as a Physical Consequence.

Attempts to provide emergency aid (pg. 123) use either the Hardware or Software Engineering Skill, depending on the nature of the Consequence.

Gameplay in a Virtuality

Scenes that take place in a virtual environment work the same as scenes that take place in the real world, but with the following twists:

- Despite taking place in a virtual environment, the system replicates your character's normal physical Skills; a very athletic person will be athletic in both the real world and in virtual environments. Many, like Stygia, also replicate your Augmentations.
- The physical stress and Consequences you've suffered in the real world do not carry over into the virtual environment. Physical stress suffered in the virtuality is not reflected in the real world.
- Most virtualities will eject you if you suffer a Physical Consequence. Upon exiting a virtuality without this safety feature, you suffer a mental attack with an Edge rating based on the worst Physical Consequence you suffered while inside. The Edge rating is +2 for Mild Consequences, +4 for Moderate, +6 for Severe, +8 for Extreme, and +10 if you are Taken Out.
- Characters typically only have Guest access to a virtuality. This access means they can only change their environment in ways that would make sense in the real world. For example, they could pick up a chair and move it, but could not change the chair into water.
- Characters with Administrator access to a virtuality have Dominion. SIMs have admin access to their personal home environments.

Dominion

The administrator of a virtuality is a virtual god. She can change the environment to suit her desires, transforming walls into air, sand into pavement, and water into fire.

To perform these changes, the admin must spend a Simple Action performing a Software Engineering or SINC (admin's choice) test (Diff: 2).

If she succeeds, she may make a Declaration (pg. 117) about the virtual environment.

Any Declaration that results in direct stress to a target, such as turning the air around him into acid, or simply ripping at the makeup of the target's digital avatar, is handled as an attack using the admin's Software Engineering or SINC (admin's choice) Skill. The WR of the attack is equal to the admin's attacking Skill Rank x2.

The victim defends with whatever Skill makes sense based on the attack, but direct attacks against the code that comprise his digital form are defended against with Cohesion.

SIMs, System Stress, and Host Systems

Regardless of the computer they inhabit, SIMs are fully self-contained pieces of software. Stress suffered by SIMs on their System Stress Track, either from direct attacks by Savant Programs and CISTs or from failed execution tests, is only suffered by the SIM and not the system that's hosting it.

Example of Conflict

Leland (*Reagan*): I've got an idea. I've got a plasti-rope dispenser. I'll tie some rope around Malpheus' spider drone, then let it climb up the outside wall and secure the rope to the roof while it also does a little recon.

Jane, you can climb up the rope, and we'll attack at the same time from the access door.

Rob (*Malpheus*): Good idea.

Krissy (*Jane*): Sounds good.

Wes (*Alexei*): I'll open the window for you then fall in behind Reagan and Anders.

Kyle (*Anders*): Reagan, I hope you don't mind if we use you for cover.

Mike (*GM*): Alright, first the spider needs to get into position with the rope. So, Malpheus, give me an Athletics test for the drone, difficulty 3.

Rob (*Malpheus*): 3. Success, barely. Good thing it was tied to a rope.

Mike (*GM*): Yep. It struggles a bit, but makes it. Now make a Stealth test to get into a position to secure the rope without being noticed, and a Perception test to determine what you see.

Rob (*Malpheus*): 4 on Stealth, 0 on Perception.

Mike (*GM*): Okay, the spider is able to latch onto an air vent without being noticed by the three guards. You don't notice anything you didn't already know about. Three guards, all carrying PAc Carbines and armor.

They are walking around looking over the edges and waiting for the access door to open.

Rob (*Malpheus*): I feed all this to the team.

Krissy (*Jane*): Alright, I'll go up first and draw their attention. Then you guys bust out firing.

Mike (*GM*): Everyone in position?

The Team: Yep!

Mike (*GM*): Alright, Initiative! Give me Strategy tests.

Leland (*Reagan*): [Rolls dice] 6!

Rob (*Malpheus*): [Rolls dice] 0…

Krissy (*Jane*): [Rolls dice] 3

Wes (*Alexei*): [Rolls dice] 1

Kyle (*Anders*): [Rolls dice] 2

Leland (*Reagan*): They're looking at the door and waiting to unload on us. I'll delay until Jane distracts them.

Mike (*GM*): [Checks the stats for the guards and secretly notes the initiative order as Jane, Reagan, Guards, Anders, Alexei, and Malpheus.] Okay Jane! You're up.

Krissy (*Jane*): I'm going to heave myself over the edge, onto the roof, then open fire on the nearest guard.

Mike (*GM*): Climbing onto the roof will be a Supplemental Action, so you'll suffer a -1 penalty on your attack.

Krissy (*Jane*): Okay, I'm burst-firing my Heavy Coil Assault Rifle [rolls dice], with the -1, my attack Effort is 4. The Weapon Rating is 5, plus 3 for burst fire.

Mike (*GM*): Since you ambushed him, his defense is effectively [rolls dice] -2. So you hit and dealt 10 points of stress. His light battle armor absorbs 3 of that, for a total of 7. His Stress Track only has 5 stress boxes, and being a minor mook (pg. 253) can only take a Mild Consequence to reduce it by -2.

Krissy (*Jane*): So he is Taken Out?

Mike (*GM*): Yeah, you can narrate the defeat if you like. If you got Spin on the attack roll, you can create an Effect Aspect.

Krissy (*Jane*): The guard doesn't even get a chance to yell out a warning before he is torn to pieces by a spray of bullets and blood. I'll put a *Bloody Mess* Aspect on the zone he was in.

Mike (*GM*): Well that got their attention. The others are now aware of you. Also, you used burst fire, so make a Firearms test, difficulty 3, to check your ammo.

Krissy (*Jane*): [Rolls dice] 1, damn. I'll spend a Fate Point to invoke my *Legionnaire, Born and Raised* Aspect for +2. They taught me better than to let my magazine run dry.

Mike (*GM*): [Takes Fate Point] Okay, I'll buy that. Reagan?

Leland (*Reagan*): You ready, Anders?

Kyle (*Anders*): As ready as I'm ever going to be.

Leland (*Reagan*): I kick open the door and open fire with my PAc Carbine, directing my own fire and Anders' toward the guy nearest us. I'm using my Concentrated Fire Advantage to allow Anders an attack as an Instant Action at the same time.

Mike (*GM*): The door flies open and the two remaining guards anxiously try to bring their weapons to bear. The ruined remains of the third guard lie nearby. Both of you make attack rolls.

Leland (*Reagan*): [Rolls dice] I got a total attack Effort of 4. Weapon Rating is +6.

Kyle (*Anders*): [Rolls dice] I got a 3. Attacking with my Light PAc Pistol, Weapon Rating is +5.

Mike (*GM*): His defense Effort is 3, but the wind is really bad up here and Anders isn't wearing a helmet to cover his face or eyes. [Offers a Fate Point to Kyle] I'm compelling the roof's *High Winds* Aspect to make you suffer a -2 penalty.

Kyle (*Anders*): [Takes the Fate Point] Thanks, I could use it. When the door flies open, Anders is shocked by the cold blast of wind and his shot flies wild.

Mike (*GM*): The crack and flash of PAc weapon discharges shake the rooftop, but only one hits home. One of the remaining guards is blasted by Reagan's PAc Carbine, suffering 7 points of stress. His armor absorbs 3, for a total of 4 stress.

The armor on his right shoulder deflects the bolt, leaving it blackened and burned.

Kyle (*Anders*): Recovering from the surprise of the cold wind, I fire my PAc pistol at the guy Reagan just shot. [Rolls dice] My attack Effort was 1. That's a miss?

Mike (*GM*): [Checks the guard's stats] Yeah. But remember that someone can still invoke Bloody Mess for free the first time.

Kyle (*Anders*): I'll do that and use it to reroll. [Re-Rolls dice] 4! He tries to dodge by twists and slips on the gore.

Mike (*GM*): That's a hit for 6 stress. His armor absorbs 3, leaving him to take 3. He can only take 1, though, so taking a Mild Consequence won't help. He's Taken Out.

Kyle (*Anders*): The PAc bolt catches him in the shoulder, spinning him like a top from the blast and sending him sprawling into the remains of his friend.

Mike (*GM*): [Checks the guard's Firearms Skill and sees it is a 3.] The remaining guard turns his Heavy PAc PDW on Reagan and Anders, raking a particle beam across the both of them. This is a beam sweep attack. The first attack is directed at Anders and suffers a -1. The second, directed at Reagan, suffers a -2. So that's 2 to Anders and 1 to Reagan. Make your defense tests.

Leland (*Reagan*): [Rolls dice] I try to dodge using Athletics. I got a total defense Effort of 4. He misses.

Kyle (*Anders*): [Rolls dice] I got a 1…

Mike (*GM*): Reagan saw it coming and was able to duck. Anders didn't. 6 stress.

Kyle (*Anders*): My armor absorbs 3, and I'll absorb 2 more with a Mild Consequence. Anders managed to mostly duck the bolt, but slammed his knee into the roof in the process. I'll take 1 stress and Cracked My Knee as a Mild Consequence.

Wes (*Alexei*): Alright. My turn… I'm executing my Esper Lord Savant Program and use it to make a devouring attack on the remaining guard. It has an execution difficulty of 3. [Rolls dice] 1, so I take 2 system stress and it executes.

Mike (*GM*): Alright, you succeeded in activating the swarm. Make your attack roll using your SINC. His defense is 3.

Wes (*Alexei*): [Rolls dice] 4! Its Weapon Rating is 4 and ignores armor. I also want to invoke my *At One with the Swarm* Aspect for +2. [Gives GM Fate Point]

The swarm flows forward like liquid glass, surging ahead to consume the remaining guard.

Rob (*Malpheus*): I'm going to use my Inspire Greatness Advantage, sending an audio stream to Alexei's mindset. It tells him: "These men are weak, Alexei. You have surpassed them, and are as God to them." This grants another +3.

Mike (*GM*): That hits. The swarm quickly takes on a reddish hue as it begins dissolving the man's skin at the molecular level. 10 stress. He takes a Mild Consequence of *IT'S EATING ME!* It's not enough though, and in a few seconds he stops screaming. The rooftop falls silent.

PLAYING THE GAME

This section covers most of the things a character may want to do that aren't covered in the earlier parts of this chapter.

In truth, no book will be able to cover every possible action a PC can take, but GMs who need to come up with impromptu rules should look to this chapter for inspiration.

Ambushing

If you attack a target, and the target was until now not aware of your presence (or your intent to attack him), that target may not add a Skill to his defense. He only gets a simple dice roll, but may still use his Armor Rating to reduce the amount of stress suffered.

Often the GM will not make defense tests for mooks (pg. 134), but should in this case.

Beam Weapons

Beam Sweep

When using a beam weapon, such as most particle acceleration weapons, you can hold down the trigger and sweep a crackling bolt of energy across your targets. This allows you to attack more than one target in a zone at a time.

Before the attack is made, determine how many targets you are trying to hit. You will then make an attack test against each target, with a cumulative -1 penalty to each (-1 for the 1st, -2 for the 2nd, etc.)

After the attack is resolved, you must make a Firearms test with a difficulty equal to 2 + the number of targets you attempted attacking, to avoid overheating the weapon. On a failed test, you cannot use the weapon again until you spend a turn doing something else while letting the weapon cool.

Overheat

You hold down the trigger on a target until your weapon overheats. The weapon's Weapon Rating is increased by +3 for this attack.

After overheating, you cannot use the weapon again until you spend a Simple Action doing something else while letting the weapon cool.

Suppression Fire

Beam weapons may also be used to lay down suppression fire. See page 134 for more on using the Block Action to lay down suppression fire.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ Log: 06:37-04,21,97]

[Malpheus] – Jane is down!

[Reagan] – What?! What happened?

[Malpheus] – She kicked in the door and went in shooting. She got three of them, but another was hiding behind a support strut.

[Reagan] – I'm pulling up her vitals. Her sleeve is still powered. Mindset is online, but… Damn! She's hit bad. Her sleeve's systems keep rebooting.

[Malpheus] – Call Anders. Get Jane back online. She can go after the shooter. I'm ghosting after the other.

[Anders] – Don't. He's going into the parking garage. The mesh is spotty down there. He'll have plenty of cracks to hide in if he knows where they are. Just watch the exits. Alexei is close.

[Malpheus] – I'll be fine. Besides, there are some locals nearby that owe me some favors.

[Reagan] – We're not bringing anyone else into this.

[Malpheus] – Relax. They're expendable.

Block Actions

When the character's action is preventative—trying to keep something from happening rather than taking direct action to make something happen—he can attempt to perform a **Block Action**. He declares what he's trying to prevent and what Skill he's using to Block. He then makes a Skill test, subject to any penalties imposed by the GM. The result is the **Block Potency**.

Later in the round, every time another character tries to perform the Blocked Action, the character trying to get past the Block makes a relevant Skill test and compares his Effort to the Block Potency.

If the attacker's Effort meets or exceeds the Block Potency, she successfully overcomes the Block. If it does not, she cannot perform that action—she has been blocked.

Attempting to overcome a Block is usually a Simple Action. If you try to overcome it and succeed, though, it is instead treated as a Supplemental Action.

Players may declare a Block against almost any sort of action or actions, and may theoretically use any Skill. However, unless the Block is simple and clear, the GM may give penalties based upon how hard the Block would be to pull off or how much of a stretch it would be. Players should never be able to "cover all bases" with a Block.

Likewise, a variety of Skills may be appropriate to getting past a Block.

For example, an assassin attempts to take the life of a senator's messenger that Reagan has been contracted to protect. During an ambush, the messenger is wounded. Reagan positions himself over the messenger and tries to hold off the attackers with a mono-edged shortsword.

During his turn, Reagan performs a Melee test to set up a Block. He rolls, setting the Block Potency to 4. He positions himself between the messenger and her attacker, focusing his efforts on keeping her safe.

Thereafter, any attempt to attack the messenger with a melee weapon requires the assassin to first make a Melee test (Diff: 4) as a Simple Action to overcome Reagan's Block. If the assassin fails, his Simple Action is wasted and he may try again on his next turn. If he succeeds, the Block is overcome and he may make a Melee attack against the messenger. However, he suffers a -1 penalty because overcoming the Block was considered a Supplemental action.

Note that Blocks need not always be physical. It's entirely possible to attempt to Block somebody from performing an action by talking them out of it, distracting them, or performing any other sort of action that could hamper or stop them.

Sample Block Actions

Suppression Fire [Firearms] – By spraying weapon fire over an area, you can make it too dangerous for foes to enter.

Restrain [Melee or Athletics] – You tackle an opponent, pinning them and holding them in place.

Distraction [Guile or Diplomacy] – You draw your foe's attention by talking to them; begging, threatening, or insulting them to get them to stop what they're doing.

Ignoring a Block

In some cases, such as suppression fire, it may actually be possible to ignore a Block. But doing so can be dangerous, and depending on the nature of the Block, the GM may allow the Blocker an Instant Action in response. In the case of suppression fire, that Instant Action might be a free attack.

Diseases and Viruses (Biological & Digital)

If a character comes into contact with a dangerous disease, he can suffer damage in the form of physical or even Mental Consequences. The disease or virus should have a rated **Potency** and a type: Airborne, Contact, or Digital.

Upon contact, the disease or virus attacks the character, adding its Potency to the attack test (a simple dice roll, no Skill added). The character defends with his Endurance, or Software Engineering in the case of computer viruses. If the defending character loses, he becomes a carrier. If the defending character is forced to take a Consequence from the disease's attack, he becomes both a carrier and victim of the disease.

Regarding Potency, the common cold may have a rating of 2 while some sort of super-potent flesh eating plague could be rated at 10. Computer viruses are rated similarly.

An infected character may be attacked repeatedly, suffering additional attacks each day until cured or killed.

The GM may rule that a disease can be permanently overcome by generating Spin on a defense test against these attacks. Time spent in a medical facility may allow you to invoke the facility's Aspect to aid in your recovery.

A character with an appropriate Aspect or Stunt may use his Education to aid in the healing process. He rolls his Education against the Potency of the disease. Any Shifts generated are added as a bonus when the victim must next make a defense test against the disease's or virus' attack.

Medicine and viral cleansing Programs may also add their Equipment Ratings to defense tests.

Falling

A character who falls from a great height suffers an attack with a bonus determined by the distance fallen. This attack is just a dice roll plus a bonus (found below) since gravity doesn't have a Skill to test.

The character may defend against the attack with Endurance. An Athletics rating of 3 or higher grants a +1 bonus, while an Athletics rating of 5 or higher grants +2.

Height	Attack Bonus
Up to 3m	+2
Up to 6m	+4
Up to 30m	+8
Up to 150m	+12
Up to 300m or more	+18

At heights slightly more than 300m the character will reach terminal velocity. The speed at which he falls will remain fairly constant after this height, so the damage from impact isn't going to increase if he falls from a higher distance.

Note that this assumes standard Earth gravity. Adjustments may need to be made for environments of greater or lower gravity.

Likewise, if the character's descent is somehow slowed, such as by wearing a wingsuit, the GM should drastically reduce the attack bonus used in the attack against the character. Likewise, if the character is moving faster than he normally would from a free fall, the attack bonus might be increased.

Armor does not help reduce the stress suffered from falling unless it features a Hydrostatic Gel Layer (pg. 200).

Fire and Environmental Hazards

Fire, electricity, radiation, noxious fumes, and other environmental hazards are rated by their **Intensity**. When they appear, and at the beginning of each round, they make an attack against everyone in the affected zone adding their Intensity rating as a bonus to the attack test. So an attack made by an Intensity 3 Fire is resolved as a simple dice roll + 3 since the fire has no Skill to test.

This attack can be defended against with Endurance, but most types of armor are useless, depending on the hazard.

Fire Intensity works as the following chart describes, which can also provide examples for similar effects:

Intensity	Description
0	The zone is on fire, but the fire can be avoided.
3	Almost everything in the zone is on fire, and the heat is pressing in on you in waves.
6	Everything in the zone is on fire, and the flames lick up near you.
9	Inferno. The zone is essentially a massive furnace.

It's also possible to be set on fire directly—like if you are shot with a flamethrower or doused in a flammable liquid and set alight. In this case, you are considered to be in an Intensity 6 Fire.

While others do not have to worry about taking stress when your character is on fire, it's very likely that the flames will spread. Every person, zone, or object that is on fire also has the Aspect *On Fire!*

Full-Auto Weapons

Burst Fire

You fire your fully automatic weapon in a short burst of bullets. For this attack, the Weapon Rating of the weapon is increased by +3, but you must make a Firearms test (Diff: 2) to avoid running out of ammo.

On a failed test, you cannot use the weapon again until you spend a Simple Action reloading or doing something else while letting the weapon cool.

Empty the Clip

You set the weapon to auto-fire and empty your clip at your target. Your weapon's Weapon Rating is increased by +5 for this attack. However, this burns through an entire magazine.

You cannot use the weapon again until you spend a Simple Action reloading.

If the weapon has the *High Capacity* Aspect, you may invoke this Aspect to perform a Firearms test (Diff: 3) to avoid running out of ammo.

Suppression Fire

Full-auto weapons may also be used to lay down suppression fire. See page 134 for more on using the Block Action to lay down suppression fire.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ Log: 07:22-04,21,97]

[Jane] – Eyes on target. Anders, I'm sending you my feed. Confirm.

[Anders] – Yeah, he matches Malpheus' image.

[Jane] – Hide and ambush me, you little pecker… Let's see how you like a shredder round through your brain case.

[Reagan] – Jane. You said you'd talk to him.

[Jane has disconnected]

[Reagan] – Damnit! Anders, talk to her.

[Anders] – Too late… That guy is very dead.

Full Defense

You may opt to do nothing but protect yourself in a conflict.

By using a Simple Action entirely to defend yourself, you gain a +2 bonus on all defense tests until your next turn.

If you have not yet acted in the round at the time when you are first attacked, you may declare a **Full Defense** at that point, foregoing your Simple Action on your turn.

Help from Others

Many hands make light work. If someone tries to help you accomplish a task, they must make a Skill test using the same Skill as the primary character with a difficulty equal to the primary character's Skill rank.

Success grants the primary character a +1 bonus on his test, while generating Spin grants +2!

Failure means you didn't help. Stall means you actually made things worse, causing the primary character to suffer a -1 penalty.

The GM is the final arbiter as to how many people can help with a task.

Hiding, Shadowing, & Camouflage

Hiding

When a character is hiding, he's remaining perfectly still and (hopefully) out of sight. Aspects related to lighting, obstacles, and other environmental factors can affect the player's Stealth test, which is opposed by a searcher's Perception.

If someone is actively searching for a hidden character, they gain a +2 on the test so long as they have some reason to actually be looking and are taking the time to do a thorough search. When someone is searching for you, assume that they'll usually do logical things like turn on the lights or otherwise do things that make it more difficult to stay hidden.

For example, consider a character hiding in a storeroom. If a guard opens the door, shines a light in, and looks around, he and the hidden character will engage in a Perception vs. Stealth contest. If the guard flips on the lights and starts methodically going through the room, hiding is much, much more difficult because he has both reason and time to search.

The good news is that this sort of searching is usually obvious, so when the guard flips on the lights and starts looking, it's the player's cue to act now.

Most of the bonuses and penalties in these situations come from Aspects, either on the scene or the characters. A dark room with the *Dark* Aspect can be invoked by the hiding player for a bonus. On the other hand, the moment the guard flips on the lights, that Aspect is gone.

Hiding Activity from Monitors: To succeed at performing an action unnoticed by the local Monitor, you must make a Skill test (Diff: 3, usually using Stealth).

The area's Mesh Aspect (pg. 184) may be invoked or compelled to modify this roll.

Shadowing

Shadowing is the art of moving while trying to remain unnoticed. It uses many of the same rules as Hiding, with Stealth Skill tests (combined with Guile). However, it is somewhat more difficult for obvious reasons.

When a character tries to move while remaining unseen, anyone looking for him gains a bonus to see him depending on how fast he is moving: +4 for normal movement, +6 for a Hustle, or +8 when Running. See page 125 for more on movement.

Don't forget the impact Aspects can have on the situation, though. For example, a heavily crowded street might have the *Crowded(P)* Aspect, which would certainly help you shadow a person on the move.

Characters may also attempt to creep. This is a Maneuver that places the *Creeping* Aspect on the character, which can be invoked to aid in moving stealthily. This Maneuver doesn't require a test to place the Aspect, but requires a Supplemental Action taken each turn to maintain it.

Camouflage

Hardware Engineering (combined with Stealth) can be used to construct blinds and other hiding aids while outdoors. Perform a Hardware Engineering test (Diff: 2) and add any Shifts you generate as a bonus on tests to hide while camouflaged.

Constructing camouflage takes roughly an hour.

> Narration [NetLink Log: 14:32-02,07,99]
>
> [Grady] – You catch the fray?
>
> [Juna] – Missed it live. Had to filter for it all day yesterday. Just finished it. I thought it was all over when Clemson hit the Star Spike.
>
> [Grady] – I know! He burned up most of the Minotaur team with it. Amazing they were able to come back.
>
> [Juna] – I don't think they would have if Tesla hadn't ambushed Diago with a grav hammer.
>
> [Grady] – It made me so happy to see Diago finally get his face smashed in.

Hold Your Action

A character can opt not to act when his turn comes around in the initiative order. He may instead choose to hold his action, delaying until after another character takes his turn.

If he holds his turn through the round, he starts the next round at the top of the initiative order. If multiple characters hold through the round, they perform a Strategy contest to determine who goes first.

Mnemonic Editing

While the process takes a few hours, a person trained in Mnemonics can attempt to repair a damaged ego the same way one might debug computer code. This process consists of making changes to the highly complex code that the mind is made of—a potentially dangerous process.

Specific memories cannot be targeted for erasure, nor can personality traits simply be removed, but areas that indicate psychological trauma can be isolated and even dampened somewhat. While the memory will remain intact, the resulting traumatic reaction will be lessened. In effect, this is an artificial way of forcing a person to come to terms with an event.

In game terms, while the patient is in a deactivated SIM state, his ego can be edited by a person trained in mnemonic editing. To do this, the ego must be hosted on a system outfitted with hostware.

The character performs a Mnemonics Skill test against a difficulty set by the type of Consequence he wishes to downgrade. The difficulty for each Consequence is listed below:

Consequence	Difficulty
Mild	4
Moderate	5
Severe	6
Extreme	7

If the Mnemonics test succeeds, the targeted Consequence is reduced as if it had recovered naturally. See page 122 for more on recovering Consequences.

If you fail, nothing happens. The patient's status does not change.

If you Stall, you cause the patient to suffer an amount of mental stress equal to the amount by which you failed.

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Out of Ammo, Overheating, & Reloading

You are not expected to track every round in a clip or exactly how hot a weapon is getting. At the same time, running out of ammo or overheating a weapon can sometimes be dramatically interesting, especially if you run out just as a swarm of sentry drones comes around the corner.

When a character makes an attack with a firearm, he may be firing one round or several. The game mechanics of the attack don't change, but the description of the attack might vary from round to round. You can also generally assume that characters are attempting to conserve their ammo and reload as needed when they have time.

However, should the GM choose, he can have the player perform a Firearms test to see how well he has been paying attention to his ammo consumption or his weapon's heat buildup.

The difficulty of this test is usually 2, but the GM may increase it if he feels you've been expending a significant amount of ammo over a short period, or have severely overheated your weapon.

On a failed test, the player must spend a Simple Action reloading or doing something else while his weapon cools.

For weapons that require physical ammunition, you may reload as a Supplemental Action so long as your Simple Action was not an attack with that weapon and you have an extra unit of ammunition available.

For weapons that have overheated, you must spend a turn not firing the weapon.

Poisons and Drugs

Poisons and drugs both have two ratings: Potency and Subtlety.

The Potency determines how hard it is to resist using Endurance (see below). The Subtlety is the difficulty for any Perception or Education tests to detect or analyze it, either to prevent exposure or to determine the cause of someone's sudden ailment. Poisons and drugs also need to have a means of application, such as food, gas, or injection.

Poisons

The first class of poisons is damaging poisons. "Damaging" is used loosely here, as it may be lethal, knock you out, or do any number of other things.

Damaging poisons are often fast-acting, found on the blades of enemies and tips of darts.

When such a poison is introduced to the body it makes an attack, adding only its Potency (0 for a mild poison, 5 for something very potent) rating to the attack test. No Skill is added. The target may defend with Endurance.

This attack occurs at the start of your first turn after exposure. It then repeats every turn until the end of the scene, when it will have run its course. The character can attempt to stop the poison with medical treatment (Education, Diff: Potency + 2), or even something as mundane as inducing vomiting when appropriate. Many damaging poisons stop if the player generates Spin on his defense test.

Some damaging poisons are slow-acting and kill over a much longer period of time, but these types are often more appropriate in the background rather than showing up directly in play.

If you want to introduce a slower-acting poison, rather than treating it as a standard attack, make an attack test (adding Potency) once per day. The victim may defend with his Endurance. If the poison's attack Effort generates Spin, then the victim acquires a Physical Consequence. Regardless of severity, these Consequences cannot be recovered until after the poison is cured.

The other class of poisons is special poisons. These are poisons that violate the rules in some way and tend to either leave a beloved NPC in a coma until a very exotic cure is administered, or will kill the person who has been exposed in a fixed period of time, so they must race to find the cure. Alternately, the poison may have killed someone in a very peculiar way and may prove the only clue to the killer's location.

In short, these are poisons that serve no purpose but to motivate the plot. That's OK! FATE adventures can tolerate a little bit of cliché, but try to keep their use to a minimum.

Drugs

Rather than damaging their target, drugs put one or more additional Aspects directly on them (as with a Maneuver). Their Potency sets the difficulty against which the subject tests their Endurance.

If the subject wins, the symptoms are passing and disappear at the end of the scene. If he loses, though, he immediately gains the Aspects in the drug description. The duration of these effects depends upon the drug. Drugs are specifically different from slow-acting damaging poisons as these Aspects are not Consequences and thus do not push the character closer to being Taken Out.

Programming

With the aid of an Agent, someone trained in software engineering can quickly create complex computer programs that can be used as tools to perform a variety of tasks.

Depending on the complexity of the program, it generally takes between a few minutes and a few hours to build a piece of software capable of helping to overcome a problem.

Creating a piece of software is effectively a Maneuver (pg. 115). The player should describe the piece of software she wishes to create, and make a Software Engineering Skill test.

If successful, as with any Maneuver, an Aspect is created. Generally only the creator can take advantage of this Aspect unless the newly created program is sent to someone else.

Keep in mind that computers are secured through the use of dedicated AIs, making it impossible to hack them with anything short of a Savant Program or CIST. The presence of this AI also means that software detected as potentially harmful will be quarantined. As such, it's very difficult to create a program that can be harmful to someone. The program would have to be sent to the intended foe, who would then need to execute it. It would then have to be deemed safe by the security AI before it would run. These criteria suggest that the likelihood of deploying a hostile program to another is rather limited.

Sample programs one might create include:

Security Response Time and Tactics Simulator

Psych Profile and Facial Response Analysis for David Krieger

17GA Tram Rail Structural Analysis and Demolition Simulation

Template Writing: It's possible to create your own compiler templates. First, determine the Cost of the item you intend to create. Writing the template is an Extended Action (pg. 105) using Hardware Engineering. The difficulty is equal to half the Cost of the item (round down, min 2). Each roll takes 4 hours.

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Push/Pull/Throw

You can attempt to push, pull, or throw your opponent out of the zone you currently occupy.

You and the defender engage in a contested Athletics + Size test. If you succeed, the target is pushed, thrown, or pulled into an adjacent zone of your choosing.

If you are larger than your target, you may push or throw your victim even farther. The target can be pushed or thrown a number of zones equal to the number of Shifts you generate, to a maximum of the difference between your Size and your victim's.

When pushing or pulling, you may choose to follow your opponent into the zone you are pushing or pulling him into as a Free Action.

Purchasing Items

When you wish to purchase something, you have a few options. In Coalition space, you can purchase it with your Rep-Rating. Outside of Coalition space, or for black market purchases, you must use Assets or request Favors (pg. 144).

Purchasing with Assets

Outside of Coalition space, or when dealing with the black market, you can purchase things with gold currency or by bartering.

When you attempt to purchase goods in this way, you make an Assets test against the Cost of the item you wish to purchase. If you succeed, the item is yours. You were able to scrape together enough gold or find something of suitable value to barter with.

If you fail, you may not purchase the item and may not attempt to do so again during the same game session or until your GM determines that enough time has passed for you to juggle your assets.

Alternatively, your GM may allow you to go into debt. If you decide that the item is worth going into debt for, you may elect to take a Lasting Aspect (pg. 113) that describes the debt. This Aspect lasts until the debt is paid.

> [Tac-Comm v1.76.4/ 02:21-04,01,97]
>
> [Jane] – Getting our gear past security isn't going to be easy.
>
> [Malpheus] – Give me a minute to pluck some strings.
>
> [Malpheus] – Done. Someone called Argon is going to slip you through in exchange for a recommendation for work with another party.
>
> [Reagan] – Who are you recommending him to?
>
> [Malpheus] – Another party. Don't ask questions you don't want answers to.

The Lasting Aspect should mention who the debt is owed to, and if you Stalled when making your Assets test to purchase the item. The Lasting Aspect should be Persistent.

The GM should work with you to define the Aspect, and is the final arbiter on when it goes away.

Purchasing with Reputation

When you wish to purchase an item or service in Coalition society, instead of exchanging currency for goods, you can simply take the item if your Rep-Rating is high enough. However, each time you do, Inter-Rep's AIs determine if your claim has a measurable impact on society that is out of proportion to your Rep-Rating.

If this is determined to be the case, your Rep-Rating takes a hit. How likely you are to take a hit depends on your current Rep-Rating, the Cost of the item, and your recent acquisition habits.

In game terms, when you wish to acquire an item, compare your Rep to the item's Cost.

Items or services with a Cost less than your Rep-Rating do not require a test. Unless you are attempting to acquire them in bulk, which would equate to a higher Cost, such items do not impact your Rep-Rating.

If the Cost of the item is the same as your Rep-Rating or higher, perform a test by rolling the dice and adding your Rep-Rating. Compare the Effort you generate to the Cost of the item.

If it is higher, you get the item without suffering a Rep hit.

If your Effort is less, you still get the item, but you suffer a hit equal to the difference between your Effort and the item's Cost.

You may not attempt to acquire an item or service with a Cost rating higher than your Rep-Rating x2, though you can try to ask someone with a higher Rep to get it for you as a Favor.

See page 113 for more on Favors.

Windfalls

Sometimes you make the big score, finally earn that big payday, sell off some valuable merchandise, or hit the jackpot.

While a permanent increase in wealth is something generally controlled by the player by increasing or decreasing the character's Assets and Reputation, characters can gain temporary windfalls.

Whenever the GM wishes to reward you with a windfall of wealth, he might do so by rewarding you with a Lasting Aspect. This Aspect should describe where the windfall came from and/or what form it takes.

As usual, the first time an Aspect is invoked or compelled, it doesn't cost a Fate Point.

Lasting Aspects representing windfalls should only last for two, maybe three, invocations. Huge windfalls might be represented with a Persistent Aspect. In that case, the GM might change it into a regular Aspect after the first few times it is invoked, and then remove it on the fourth or fifth time.

Purchasing Options

When a character wants something, there are several ways he can get it. Depending on his circumstances and social standing, he generally has the following options:

Purchase with Assets – As described on the previous page, you can make an Assets test to barter or exchange gold currency. If you fail, you can go into debt.

Purchase With Rep – As described on the previous page, you can acquire goods for free as allowed by your Rep-Rating. An attempt to acquire exceedingly valuable goods can result in a Rep hit.

Trade – The simple trading of a specific item for another. Remember that the worth of an item can vary based on several factors, such as whom you are bartering with and what you are offering. If the goods you are offering are of lower Cost, you can sometimes make up the difference with an Assets test.

For example, you might offer to trade a Light PAc Pistol (Cost 5) for a Heavy Coil PDW (Cost 7). In this case, in addition to the exchange, you'd need to make an Assets test. The difficulty of this test is equal to the difference between the Cost of the items, x2. In the example above, you'd make the exchange and attempt an Assets test (Diff: 4).

If your item is worth more than the one you are trading for, you might gain a windfall.

Favors – Two types of favors exist. The first is an informal favor that requires no game mechanics; it's just an agreement between two or more characters.

The second uses the Favor rules (pg. 144) and consists of pinging your social network in search of someone willing to help you, based purely upon your contacts in your virtual communities.

Contracts – These are common when working with the Houses or apostate companies, and are simply ways to make an informal favor more official. Like other informal favors, no game mechanics are needed.

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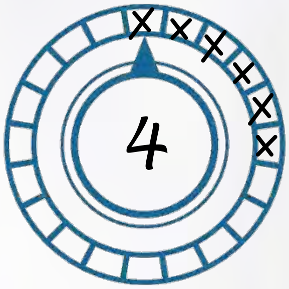
Rep-Ratings (Tracking & Using Reputation)

The Coalition employs a complex system of Reputation tracking that is used in lieu of a traditional economy.

This simplified and abstracted version of the Coalition's system is used to track the Rep-Rating of your characters. It is not as complex as the system that exists in the game world, but this is a game and it doesn't need to be.

Tracking Rep

Your Reputation is recorded on a track like the one shown below, which shows a Reputation Track in which the character has a Rep-Rating of 4 and has gained 6 boxes worth of bumps.



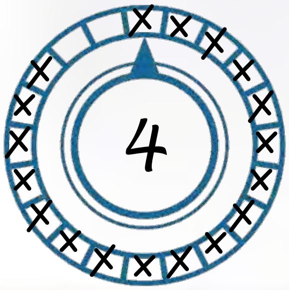
The boxes represent incremental changes in your Rep-Rating.

When you get a Rep bump, place a number of marks equal to the **Value** of the bump, starting in the box designated as the starting point, continuing around in a clockwise fashion.

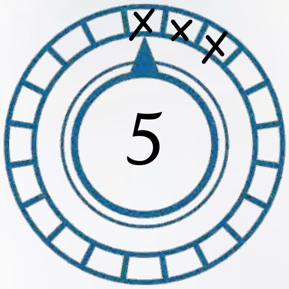
Additional bumps are added starting in the next free space.

If you fill the wheel with bumps, increase your Rep-Rating by 1, erase all your marks, and continue placing marks around the track.

For example, if your track looks like this…

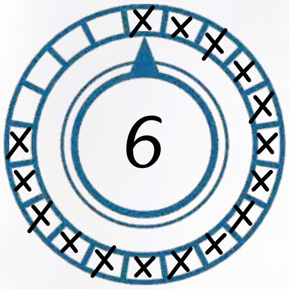


…and you get a bump of with a Value of 5, your track should now look like this…

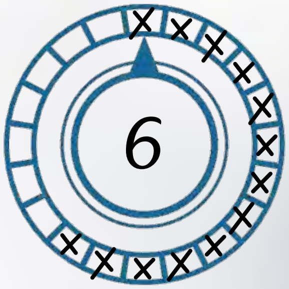


If you take a hit, erase a number of the marks you've made equal to the Value of the hit you took, working counter clockwise, starting with the marked box farthest along the track.

For example, if your track looks like this…

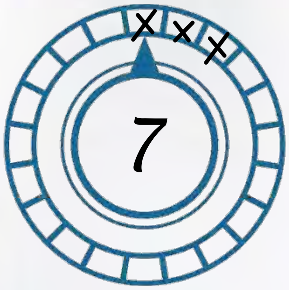


…and you suffer a hit with a Value of 3, your track should now look like this…

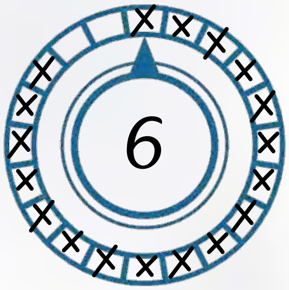


If hits cause you to erase all of your marks, reduce your Rep-Rating by 1. Then refill your Reputation Track, leaving only enough boxes unchecked to account for your hits.

So, if your track looks like this…



…and you suffer a hit of 5, your track should now look like this…



Hits and Bumps

Your Rep-Rating goes up and down based on how people rate you.

When a person wishes to rate you, they may do so by submitting their rating to the CCRP. This is generally a trivially simple matter, though it costs a small amount of one's own Rep to do so.

Upon encountering a person, your AR display device will generally display their identity by pinging their CID. Generally this takes less than a second, and their profile appears as an ARO floating near their head.

If you wish to rate them, you can do so using your standard AR interface.

When rating someone, giving them a bump or hit, your own Reputation takes a hit of 1.

The Rep-Rating belonging to the person you are rating takes a bump or hit with a Value up to your Rep-Rating. You may choose to give a smaller bump or hit, withholding a small amount to ensure positive interactions in the future.

This is done anonymously, but someone paying close attention to their Rep can usually figure out who rated them and by how much.

So if you wish to give a friendly clerk a bump, and your Rep-Rating is 5, you suffer a hit of 1 and the clerk gains a bump from 1 to 5. If you give him the largest bump you can (5), and your Rep-Rating later increases to 6, you could go back and give him another bump of 1.

You can change your rating of a person at any time. If you bump someone and they later offend you, you can turn your bump into a hit.

No matter how many bumps you receive, your Rep-Rating may never exceed 11.

Fame and Infamy

Whether by writing a popular template, becoming a well-known sensie star, or any number of other deeds, it's possible for a character to gain some measure of fame.

Fame generally comes from gaining renown in a specific network, usually from fans of your work, and is best represented with the Fame Stunt (pg. 169). You can also become well known for your work sponsoring a specific agenda. This is best represented with the Agenda Celebrity Stunt (pg. 166).

Infamy, on the other hand, can be reflected in both your Rep-Rating and in the form of Lasting Aspects.

Favors

When your Rep-Rating or your personal assets are not enough to get you what you need, you can request a Favor of those in your personal network.

By putting out a call for aid across your various physical and virtual social networks, you can attempt to gain assistance.

To do this, the GM must first determine the Value of the Favor. If you are attempting to acquire an item, the Value of the Favor equals half the Cost of the item, rounded up. Favors that require work on the part of others can

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vary in Value. Things like the amount of time, personal expense, and potential Rep impact the person must take on to grant the favor should all be considered.

Once you know the Value of the Favor, perform a relevant Networking Skill test against a difficulty equal to its Value. The results differ depending on whether you use House Networking or Apostate Networking.

Sample Favors

Favor Value Rating	Sample Favor
1/2 Item’s Cost	Acquire or fabricate an item with a Cost too high for you to fabricate (delivery may be a separate Favor)
(1/2 Item’s Cost) +3	Acquire a restricted item (delivery may be a separate Favor)
3	Find basic details about, or the location of, a typical Coalition citizen
3	Deliver an item you already own to a location on the same planet
4	Find basic details about, or the location of, a typical apostate citizen
5	Find basic details about, or the location of, a criminal or citizen in hiding
6	Deliver a restricted item you already own to a location on the same planet

House Networking and Favors

If you succeed on the Networking test, you suffer a hit to your Rep-Rating with a Value of 1, and the Favor is granted by someone in your physical or virtual social circle.

If you fail, you get to make a choice. You can choose to be granted the Favor and suffer a hit to your Rep-Rating with a Value equal to the Value of the Favor. Otherwise, you may choose to withdraw the Favor request, suffering only a Value 1 Rep hit in exchange for wasting everyone’s time.

If you Stall, the Favor is not granted. And in asking, you have appeared greedy or arrogant to your social networking circles. You suffer a hit to your Rep-Rating equal to the Value of the Favor. In addition, you may obtain a Lasting Aspect that reflects your network’s current negative opinion of you. This Aspect should last no more than about a week.

Apostate Networking and Favors

If you succeed on the Networking test, you are granted the Favor and gain a Lasting Aspect of *Tapped My Network*. This Aspect lasts about a week.

If you fail, you get to make a choice. You can choose to be granted the Favor and gain a Lasting Aspect of *Tapped Out My Network(P)* that lasts for about a month. Otherwise, you may choose to withdraw the Favor request, suffering only the *Tapped My Network* Aspect for about a week.

If you Stall, the Favor is not granted. And in asking, you have appeared greedy or arrogant to your social networking circles. You gain both the *My Tapped Out My Network(P)* Aspect, and an Aspect called *Social Pariah*. Both of these Aspects last for about a month.

Further failures do not grant additional Aspects, but prolong the duration of these Aspects. These Aspects should be compelled whenever you attempt to use your Apostate Networking Skill to ask for Favors or otherwise request things of your apostate associates.

Repairs

Given the right tools and enough time, Hardware Engineering can be used to repair damaged gear. Repair is generally handled as an Extended Action, taking 4 hours per test against a difficulty equal to half the Item's Cost. The GM may decide to increase or decrease these factors as dictated by the campaign.

Some complex items, such as vehicles, may have their own Stress Tracks. To repair such an item, you must remove its Consequences.

Removing Consequences from an item works exactly like it does for a character (pg. 122), except you must perform a Hardware Engineering test to repair the item's damage.

The amount of time required to repair a Consequence and the difficulty of the Engineering test are described below.

Consequence	Time Required	Difficulty
Mild	1 day	2 + Item's Size
Moderate	1 week	3 + Item's Size
Severe	2 weeks	4 + Item's Size
Extreme	1 month	5 + Item's Size

If you fail to meet the required difficulty, take note of the amount by which you failed. You have the option to make up the difference by purchasing some replacement parts or hiring a professional to complete the job.

The Cost of the parts is equal to the amount by which you failed the Engineering test to make the repairs.

For example, if you fail on your test and miss the difficulty by 4, you may make up the difference by acquiring the necessary parts or labor at a Cost of 4.

Resleeving, Forking, & Merging

When you resleeve or become a SIM, you suffer a mental attack with an Edge rating of 8. You may defend with your Cohesion and the mnemonics engineer overseeing the procedure can attempt to aid you (pg. 137).

The Cost of resleeving is factored into the cost of the new sleeve. If you are not resleeving, and intend instead to exist as a SIM, the Cost of this service depends on your insurance policy (pg. 207).

Modifiers

- SIMs and characters in a cybersleeve have either the *SIM State(P)* or *Synthetic Biology(P)* Aspect. These Aspects represent minds prone to fragmentation and should be compelled during resleeving.
- If this is the first time you have ever resleeved, the Edge of the attack is increased by +2.
- If you are resleeving from your mnemonic core after being killed, and you remember dying, the Edge of the attack is increased by +2.
- If you resleeve into a clone of your last biosleeve, or the exact same model of cybersleeve, you gain a +2 bonus on your defense test.

Forking

Forking is a term for creating a copy of an ego and allowing it to live while another copy runs free. While one would assume this would be incredibly useful, it has some pretty major downsides.

The first downside is that forking is psychologically damaging. When you make an exact copy of yourself, you are in effect making yourself unnecessary. The copy can do everything you can do. It can perform the same jobs, create the same art, and has the same relationships. Any sense of being special in any way is stripped from you. You are obsolete.

Additionally, it is not uncommon for a fork to react to the original with aggression, even going so far as trying to kill the original to preserve itself and/or achieve status as an individual.

Learning that you have been forked causes you to suffer a mental attack with an Edge rating of +4.

Forking is also highly illegal, listed in the Humanity Preservation Act as a crime punishable by death and erasure. In a universe where copying a person's mind is possible, individuality is their most prized possession. Knowingly taking part in the intentional forking of another ego, or allowing it to be done to you, is considered a deplorable act by all but the most extreme posthumans.

Merging

In some cases, such as when you have been forked or if you are restored from backup and later find your intact mnemonic core, you can attempt to merge the multiple instances of your ego into a single cohesive whole.

Merging requires the use of a resurrection chamber. Once the process is completed, you will be able to remember everything that has happened to all of the merged instances.

However, merging is often psychologically damaging. When merging, you suffer a mental attack with an Edge equal to the total number of instances being merged together, plus a trauma bonus.

The trauma bonus is determined by the worst Mental Consequence any of the instances is currently suffering. If the worst Consequence any instance has is a Mild Consequence, the trauma bonus is +4; a Moderate Consequence results in +6; Severe results in +8; Extreme results in +10.

Unrecoverable Backups

In some cases, such as due to trauma, excessive resleeving, or simple madness, the mnemonics engineer in charge of the resurrection chamber or SIM server may deem an ego unfit for resleeving or restoration.

Depending on the severity of the issue, he might prescribe mnemonic editing to attempt to repair the damage, or he might declare the ego unrecoverable and refuse to sleeve it.

In game terms, if a character has suffered a Severe Mental Consequence, the mnemonics engineer will prescribe mnemonic editing.

If the character has suffered an Extreme Mental Consequence, or has been mentally Taken Out, he will refuse to resleeve the ego.

Forks in Your Campaign

Just because it violates the Humanity Preservation Act doesn't mean that it can't happen. So what happens when a PC makes a copy of themself?

A forked PC can be handled in one of several ways depending on the desires of the player and the GM.

One option, easily the most difficult to manage as the GM, is to let the player play all copies of his character at the same time. While this may feel like the most realistic option for the player, it can become difficult to manage multiple instances of a character.

Optionally, the player can pick one version of his character to play, and the others become NPCs under the control of the GM. If the copy is going to hang around for a while, though, it may be a good idea to represent the copy through a Lasting Aspect.

Just remember that a forked copy is not a slave. It has all the wants and desires of the original, including a desire to be in charge of his own life.

Size Rating	Objects	Weight	Zones	Number of People
-4	Bacterium	.5g	<1	<1
-3	Grasshopper	5g	<1	<1
-2	Baseball	.5kg	<1	<1
-1	Human Child	5kg	<1	<1
0	Adult Human	50kg	<1	1
1	Large Motorcycle	500kg	<1	4
2	Elephant	5000kg	1	16
3	Tank	50,000kg	4	50
4	Large House	half mil kg	16	250
5	Aircraft Carrier	5 mil kg	50	1000
6	Space Station	50 mil kg	250	4000
7	City	500 mil kg	1000	16,000
8	Large Island	5 bil kg	4000	50,000
9	Small Country	50 bil kg	16,000	250,000
10	Planetoid	half tril kg	64,000	1 mil

Size and Weight

Living creatures and inanimate objects come in all shapes and sizes. The following table can be used as a guide to assigning a Size category.

Lifting Things

To determine a character's lift capacity, multiply the weight associated with his Size by his Athletics. For example, if a normal human (Size 0) has an Athletics of 2, his lift capacity is 100 kg. This means he can lift and move 100 kg without the need to perform an Athletics test.

If your character's Athletics is 0, reduce his lift capacity by half.

The default difficulty to lift an item that weighs up to 150% of your lift capacity is equal to your Athletics +2. To lift an item that weighs up to double your lift capacity, the difficulty of the Athletics test is equal to your Athletics +4.

You may not lift more than double your lift capacity.

Carrying Things

When a character carries something heavy, he is considered to be taking a Supplemental Action. The penalty for this Supplemental Action is -1 if the weight carried is half or less than his lift capacity. If it is more than half his lift capacity, he suffers a -2 penalty. If it is more than his lift capacity, up to a maximum of double, he suffers a -3.

Taking Aim

This is a common Maneuver used to set up a careful shot using a ranged weapon.

The character must spend a Simple Action watching his target and succeed on a Perception test (Diff: 2) to place the *In My Sights* Aspect on his would-be victim.

If successful, he may invoke that Aspect for free on his next turn. However, this Temporary Aspect is very fragile, and the GM may call for him to perform another test to replace it every few rounds if the target is moving around a lot.

Also, the GM should consider increasing the difficulty for certain factors such as extreme distance, rain, fog, erratic movements, shooting from an unstable position, and so on.

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> [Versa-Link Log: 14:15-03,08,98]
>
> [Micah] – I'm thinking about Apotheosis.
>
> [Tess] – Really?
>
> [Micah] – Yeah, you know. I've been thinking about it for a while now.
>
> [Tess] – Why? Why would you do that?
>
> [Micah] – Why not? I know you think I wouldn't be the same or whatever, but Rachel did it and she's still herself.
>
> [Tess has disconnected]

Taking Cover

A character may take cover behind objects within the same zone as a Free Action. This is a good idea when you are about to come under heavy enemy fire.

There are two types of cover: **light cover** and **hard cover**.

Light cover represents being hidden behind objects that may deflect incoming projectiles, but not necessarily stop them. It may also mean the character is behind hard cover, but only a portion of his body is covered. This includes hiding in or behind dense foliage, furniture, alcoves in walls, concrete pillars, and so on. Moving behind such cover is a Free Action to perform a Maneuver that grants the character the Aspect *Behind Light Cover*. This Maneuver does not require a Skill test.

Hard cover is something that will stop most types of projectiles, like lattice-carbonite plates, reinforced walls, and so on. In this case, the Maneuver grants the Aspect *Behind Hard Cover(P)*. Since this is a Persistent Aspect it can be invoked for free for a bonus or reroll. If the GM allows, the player may spend a Fate Point to invoke it to Declare, "I can't be hit behind this." In such a case, he would be protected from attacks as long as he stays behind cover or until the attacking enemy moves to attack from a different location.

Time

When a character takes an action, it is expected to take a certain amount of time, ranging from a few moments to a few days. Sometimes characters need to take longer to do something or want to do something a little faster.

When generating Spin on some tests, the GM may reduce the time required to perform the action by one increment.

Time Increments

Rating	Time Increment
0	Instant
1	A Round (around 3 sec.)
2	A Scene (around 5 min.)
3	An Hour
4	A Day
5	A Week
6	A Month
7	Three Months
8	A Year
9	Three Years
10	A Decade
11	Forever

Vacuum

Exposure to vacuum is the same as any other Hazard (pg. 136). It has an Intensity of 6, and can be defended against with Endurance.

Vacuum Suits (pg. 199) can allow you to go for extended periods of time in a vacuum safely.

Cybersleeves are immune to the harmful effects of vacuum.

Zero Gravity

Zero-gravity environments have a Persistent Aspect of *Zero-G(P)* which can be invoked or compelled to affect all characters in the zone.

Zones

When setting the scene for a conflict, the GM should thoroughly describe the area and explain what and where the zones are.

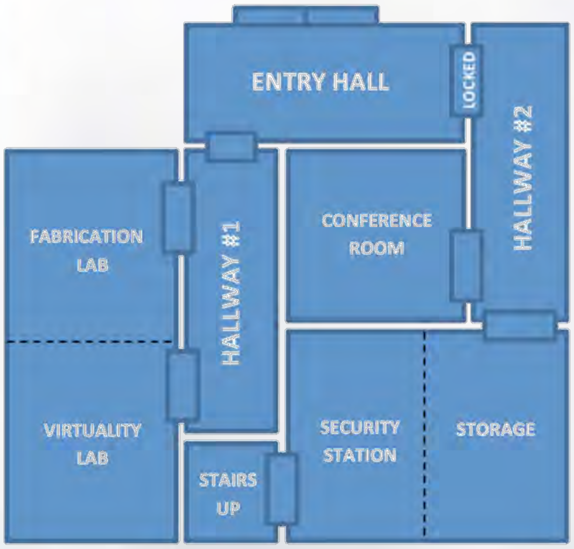
For conflict scenes taking place in complex environments, it can be very beneficial to show the players a map of the area with the zones clearly labeled.

Characters in the same zone are in hand-to-hand combat range. They can punch, grapple, and stab with ease.

Characters in adjacent zones can make good targets for thrown objects or short-range shots from ranged weapons.

Characters five to ten zones apart are often at the limit of effective weapon range—dozens to hundreds of yards.

This is deliberately abstract and involves some bending of space. Maps made for a good fight should be kept simple.



It's a good idea to just lay a piece of paper (or a white board!) down in the middle of the playing area and then sketch the basic map. When a few terrain elements have been drawn, it should become obvious how to divide the map into zones and apply scene Aspects.

Avoid strictly laying out a grid unless the area is relatively featureless, such as an open desert or field of snow. The zone system works best with non-orthogonal layouts. Zones should not only represent loose distances but also represent the relationships between space and ease of travel. Zones in wide-open spaces can be big, for example, while zones in a spacecraft or building can be much smaller: the individual rooms, with their walls as boundaries. A long straight corridor can reasonably be a single zone.

ZONE	**ASPECTS**
Entry Hall	*Welcome Desk, Comfortable Chairs*
Hall #1	*Laser Motion Tracking System*
Hall #2 (Door Locked)	*Stale Air and Silence, Nanoswarm Sensor System*
Conference Room	*Faux-Oak Conference Table, Telecomm Hardware*
Fab Lab	*Strewn with Memory Modules and Discarded Prototypes*
VR Lab	*Comfortable Recliners and Nutrient Feeds*
Storage	*Scattered Containers*
Security Station	*Security Desk, Alarm Panel*
Stairs	*They go up!*

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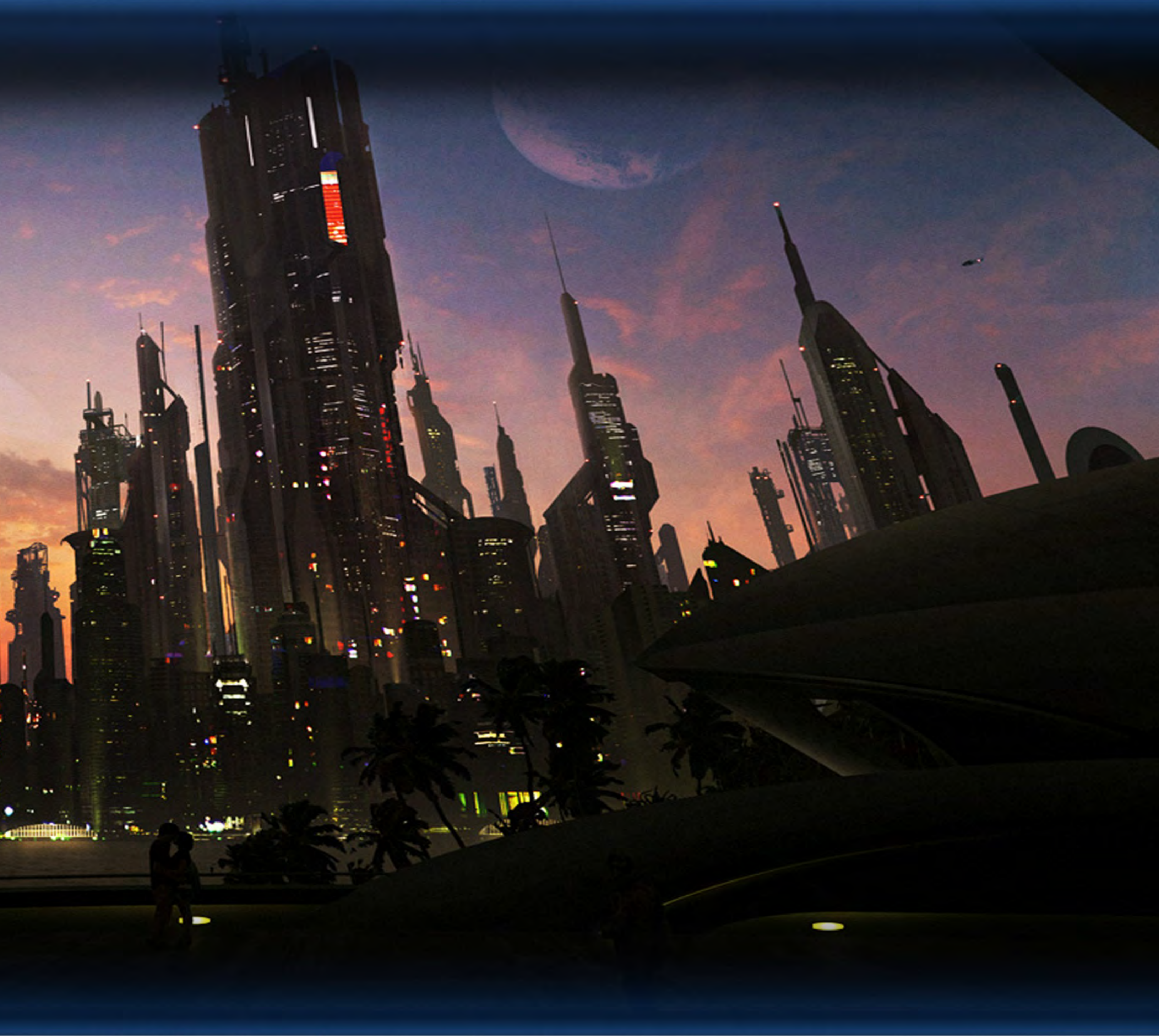
CHARACTERS



CHARACTER CREATION

The Character Concept

Hopefully by this point you have at least skimmed the material presented earlier in this book that details the Nova Praxis setting. If you haven't, you should do so. You'll need to have at least a basic understanding of the setting to effectively develop an idea for the type of character you want to play.

This chapter will guide you through character creation, a process with eight major steps. But before you get started on those, there is one step you must complete first: Step 0, if you will.

The very first thing you must do before diving into character creation is to develop your character's overarching concept.

Nova Praxis is written assuming that your character will be a member of a crew that is involved, at least tangentially, in the Shadow War between the Houses. You'll want to talk to the other players to see what sort of crew your characters will be a part of, and to determine what each character's roles and responsibilities in the group will be. The last thing you want is every player trying to fill the same character concept, so talk it out and make sure you can develop a good team dynamic.

Of course, the Nova Praxis setting is a large one, and there are plenty of other ways to play. Perhaps your characters are Centurions working undercover to bust an ascension cult. Maybe your characters are the ascension cult.

Whatever the case, chances are that your group will have at least two or three other PCs, and you will need to know how your character relates to both the Nova Praxis setting and the other PCs.

Unlike Aspects, the character concept doesn't have a function as part of the game's mechanics. It just exists to help you solidify your ideas.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.4/ 06:11-06,12,97]

[Anders] – You really think there is more to all of this?

[Alexei] – Things that are supposed to add up don't. Things that shouldn't be connected are.

[Anders] – Reagan says you're just paranoid. Says you crossed the wrong wires when you freed your mindset.

[Alexei] – What do you think?

The sample characters starting on page 160 are good examples of character concepts, but here are a few more examples:

Sample Character Concepts

Former Centurion Combat Pilot
Sexually Ambiguous Sensie Star
High Profile HPA Abolitionist
Muscle for the Rings of Olympus
High Strung Ex-Purifier
Black Market Mnemonics Engineer

Once you've got a basic idea of your character's concept and what you'd like him or her (or it!) to be good at, you can start working through the basic steps of character creation listed below:

Step 1 – Select five Aspects for your character, each corresponding to a letter on the Aspect Alphabet.

Step 2 – Determine your starting State. Will you be Pure, Apotheosized, or a SIM?

Step 3 – Pick your Skill set, and determine what rank you have in each Skill.

Step 4 – Select Stunts. Your character begins the game with three Stunts.

Step 5 – Determine your allegiance: House or Apostate?

Step 6 – Determine your starting Rep-Rating.

Step 7 – Select the free equipment you begin the game with, and purchase more if desired.

Step 8 – Determine how many stress boxes you have on each Stress Track.

Step #1 – Select Aspects

Aspects are used to describe important aspects of your character, and should describe parts of your character that you wish to be relevant to the campaign.

An Aspect, whether a phrase or a quote, should always consist of at least three to eight words. You don't want it to be overly simple, but at the same time, you don't want it to be overly wordy. After all, you'll be calling out your Aspects in play—a mouthful of an Aspect may grow tiresome quickly.

Characters get 5 Aspects, each of which should be a balance of both positive and negative whenever possible. They should work as both a way for your character to excel at his niche, and suffer in ways you find interesting and character-defining.

While not required, it is recommended (especially for new players) to use the Aspect Alphabet technique.

The Aspect Alphabet uses each of the first five letters of the alphabet to define a specific type of Aspect. This technique, and the types of Aspects it suggests, are used to help produce believable and well-rounded characters that have goals, methods of reaching those goals, and reasons for not having already reached them.

One more word of advice: remember the rules for scopes on page 108. These rules state that more than one of the same type of Aspect cannot be invoked at the same time. Keep that in mind when selecting Aspects. Having multiple Aspects that basically say the same thing about your character isn't useful.

If, for example, you have three Aspects that could reasonably be invoked to help your character on Guile tests to bargain for good prices, you may still only invoke one. Because of this, it's better to be sure your Aspects don't all share the same focus.

The Aspect Alphabet

"A" is for "Ambition" – What are your goals? What drives you to put your life, reputation, and sanity on the line?

- *"I'll make captain one day!"*
- *Obsessed with Becoming a Sensie Star*
- *Walking the Long Road to Ascension*

"B" is for "Belief" – What do you believe in? What philosophies guide your actions and make you the person you are?

- *"A SIM isn't human. It's just delusional software."*
- *"I'd lay down my life for the Coalition."*
- *Suspicious of Technology and the Horrors it Can Unleash*

"C" is for "Connection" – What person, place, or event still plays a large role in your life? Is there someone you can always depend on? Was there an event in your life that made you who you are?

- *Grew up on the Streets of Olympus*
- *Trained by Targe Gamarrol, Praetorian of House Tsarya*
- *"I saw the technophage with my own eyes!"*

"D" is for "Disadvantage" – Why haven't you achieved your goals already? What weaknesses, addictions, compulsions, or challenges stand in your way?

- *Soft Spot for the Damsel in Distress*
- *"Never mind the apostates. They're expendable."*
- *Crippling Fear of Space Travel*

"E" is for "Expertise" – What are you good at? How do you go about overcoming obstacles? In a broad sense, what methods do you employ to succeed in life?

- *Smuggler with a Heart of Gold*
- *"I've never met a system I couldn't crack."*
- *Silver-Tongued Devil Always Gets His Way*

Step #2 – Determine Your Starting State

Characters begin play either as Pure human, Sleeved, or as a substrate-independent mind (SIM). Choose which your character will be.

Keep in mind that it is possible to change states during play. A Pure character can purchase the Apotheosis Augmentation (pg. 213). Once you have undergone Apotheosis, you can change between Sleeved and SIM states via a resurrection chamber (pg. 206). However, you can never go back to being Pure.

Should you change states, you automatically lose the State Benefits of your previous state and gain the State Benefits of your new state.

Pure

Pure characters still inhabit the body they were born with. They have not undergone Apotheosis, though they may still have any number of Augmentations, both bioware and cyberware.

State Benefits: You have 8 Skill Ranks to distribute among the Athletics, Endurance, and Perception Skills (max rank in a single Skill is 5). You also gain an additional Aspect that must be used to describe some physical trait related to your body.

Your Refresh Rating is increased by +2.

You also gain the Carpe Diem (pg. 167) Stunt, and may increase your rating in any one non-Physical Skill by +1. You may not use this bonus to increase a Skill rank above 5.

You lose all State Benefits of being Pure (including the Skill bonus) if you take the Apotheosis Augmentation (pg. 213).

SIM

The substrate-independent mind (SIM) has undergone Apotheosis, but has elected to reside in a host computer system purely as software instead of downloading into a sleeve.

The Coalition allows registered SIM citizens to make use of the mesh's sensors, allowing them to view the real world via unsecured mesh sensors. There are restrictions, however, imposed by the Humanity Preservation Act.

You may only view the world from one mesh at a time, and it takes about five minutes to transition from one mesh to another. Alternatively you may shift your perspective from sensor to sensor within the same mesh at a pace roughly equivalent to a running human. This allows you to "walk" along with people in the real world.

State Benefits: You have 7 Skill Ranks to distribute among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception Skills. (The max rank in a single Skill is 5). While you obviously do not have a physical body, these Skills allow you to interact with virtual objects.

You gain the SIM State (pg. 174) Stunt and one of the following Stunts for free: Digitally Evolved, Digital Spider, Drone Jock, Infusion, Skilled (SINC), or System Slip.

Sleeved

You have undergone Apotheosis, and inhabit a sleeve. It may be the body you were born with, transformed via Apotheosis, or one you've purchased.

State Benefits: You begin play with a biosleeve or cybersleeve with a Cost no greater than the higher of your Assets or Rep-Rating, +4.

Later steps in the character creation process will guide you through determining your Assets and Rep-Rating.

See page 209 for more on sleeves.

Playing a SIM

The Home Environment

SIMs spend most of their time in their home environment. This environment is a part of them, and they take it with them from host to host. It can vary from SIM to SIM, but usually consists of a multi-room apartment in which physical actions result in program executions. For example, a SIM's Agent may appear as a real person or a pet. Walking through a door may launch a mapping program, appearing to you as a model of the city sitting on a table in the room. Physical action is not a necessity, but it helps keep the SIM cohesive. By emulating real-world environments and physics, the SIM is better able to maintain his humanity.

Other SIMs can visit your home environment, and non-SIMs can jack into it like any other virtuality. Of course, they need your permission and you still have dominion over your home environment. See page 130 for more about what it means to have dominion over a virtual environment.

Lag

You may suffer penalties due to lag on Skill tests when acting through machines located a great distance from the machine you are hosted on.

If you are hosted on a local machine (within one thousand km), you do not suffer a penalty. If you are hosted farther away, but within the same star system, you only suffer a -2 penalty. When working through machines located outside of the star system within which you are currently hosted, you suffer a -4 penalty.

Physical Stress

Most virtualities have a safety feature that kicks you out of the virtuality if you suffer a Consequence. In the case of a SIM, they are sent back to their home environment.

Hosting

A SIM may jump from one host system to another, taking his home environment with him. If the host system is open to accepting him, no Skill test is required and the process takes about 10 minutes to upload to a new host within 1000 km. It takes an hour to upload to a new host in the same star system but more than 1000 km away, or about four hours for an out-of-system host.

To be hosted on a system that's normally closed to you, you must gain entry using the Eminent Domain Savant Program.

Interaction with the Real World

Because SIMs have no body, they can only interact with the real world via digital interfaces.

Viewing the physical world is done through sensors. If you are hosted on a SIM-cell module, you can see the world through the eyes of your host. If using mesh sensors, you can see and hear anything visible or audible to them. How much of an area is visible to the local mesh is described via Mesh Aspects (pg. 184).

For physical interaction, you need to rely on the use of a drone. The Puppeteer Savant Program makes this much easier, but any SIM can issue commands to a drone they own.

SIMs often interact with the world through a technique called ghosting. Local mesh sensors can create a high-quality 3D map of the area, which can be used to provide the SIM with a realistic point of view.

Thus, the SIM can walk around and talk with anyone wearing an AR interface device, and the SIM can view the world from that point of view.

SIMs that are ghosting make use of public mesh access privileges, and in doing so are required to appear as an ARO to anyone nearby. The HPA insures that SIMs are not allowed to walk around the physical world as invisible ghosts; they must be visible as semi-transparent entities.

Step #3 – Distribute Skill Ranks

Skill Sets

Select one of the Skill Sets listed below. The set you select determines the number of Skills you have at each rank.

Skills you do not place ranks into default to a rating of 0.

Specialist	Expert	Generalist
One Rank 5	Three Rank 4	Seven Rank 3
Two Rank 4	Three Rank 3	Eight Rank 2
Two Rank 3	Four Rank 2	Three Rank 1
Three Rank 2	Six Rank 1	
Six Rank 1		

Skills

Assets – The general measure of your wealth, be it a stash of gold, valuable art, ownership of land, a habitat, a vehicle, and so on. Assets determines how many restricted items you can begin play with, and is used to buy black market goods.

Cohesion – Your mental stability and sense of self. It's the ability to deal with psychological trauma, retain your humanity, and recover from resurrection. Adds to your Mental Stress Track.

Demolitions – The ability to use explosives, such as grenades or satchel charges, both in combat and to demolish structures.

Diplomacy – The ability to talk with people in a friendly fashion, make a good impression, and perhaps convince others to see your side of things in a dispute or debate.

Education – Education measures "book learning." It covers history, science, geography, literature, sociology, government, physics, math, and other academic fields of study.

Engineering, Hardware (H.Eng) – The understanding of how machinery works, for the purposes of operating it, building it, repairing it, and taking it apart.

Engineering, Software (S.Eng) – Your understanding of how human-written computer software works, both in how to write code and manipulate existing software. Programs can be written to aid characters in the form of Maneuvers (pg. 115), but cannot bypass another system's security. This Skill is also used to operate CISTs (pg. 203).

Firearms – Your capacity to use projectile weapons, be they railguns, coil guns, particle accelerators, or heavy artillery such as cannons or vehicular weaponry.

Guile – The ability to lie, con, seduce, or bluff. Also the ability to haggle for a good deal.

Insight - Mental reflexes or "common sense." It is used to make quick and accurate decisions based on unexpected or incomplete information. It is also used to intuit other's emotions.

Intimidation – The ability to force others to do as you wish through threat of force; also used to torture others for information.

Melee – The understanding of how to use your body as a weapon, or how to use handheld melee weapons.

Mnemonics – The understanding of software minds, both human egos and AIs. You can perform mnemonic editing on an ego, and aid in resleeving, merging, and forking.

Networking, Apostate (A.Net) – The quality and quantity of the contacts you have that are willing to provide you aid among apostates.

Networking, House (H.Net) – The number of contacts you have among the Houses and their desire or ability to help you. House Networking also determines your starting Rep.

Pilot – Your knowledge of driving and flying vehicles of all sorts, and your familiarity with their navigational systems.

Research – Your ability to quickly find information on the Extranet or a closed mesh, or locate SIMs in a host system.

Resolve – The measure of your courage, willpower, and ability to resist temptation. It also represents the drive to not quit in the face of overwhelming opposition. Adds to your Mental Stress Track.

Stealth – Your ability to hide, filch items, pick pockets, and move about unnoticed.

Strategy – The ability to react, organize, and prepare for conflict, as well as analyze and overcome the plans of your enemy.

Physical Skills

These Skills represent the capabilities of your body or sleeve. If you are a Pure or SIM character, you may place ranks in these Skills as described under the State Benefits of being Pure or a SIM (pg. 155). If you are Apotheosized, these Skills are determined by your sleeve.

Athletics – How well you can move your body: running speed, balance, hand-eye coordination, and so on. Also determines how well you can use your body to move something else: lifting, dragging, pulling, and the like. Adds to your Physical Stress Track.

Endurance – Your health, vigor, and ability to withstand pain, toxins, sicknesses, and diseases of the body. Adds to your Physical Stress Track.

Perception – The quality of your five senses and general awareness of your surroundings. Can be used to make Assessments (pg. 116).

Special Skill

SINC – The ability to write and use Self-Interfacing Neural Code, the computer code that comprises Savant Programs.

You may not put ranks in SINC or perform SINC tests unless you also purchase the Savant Stunt (pg. 173). The Savant Stunt grants you a SINC Skill Rank of 1.

You may only improve SINC beyond a rating of 1 by purchasing the Skilled Stunt (during or after character creation), or by swapping Skills Ranks at a Milestone.

Step #4 – Select Stunts

Stunts are special abilities, or special uses of Skills, that separate you from the masses. They may represent unique combat options, proficiency with certain tactics, special resistances, or even relationships.

Characters begin play with 3 Stunts. As your character develops, he will gain more.

Characters who purchase the Savant Stunt (pg. 173) may also select Savant Programs, which are special sorts of Stunts that allow a Savant to use the SINC Skill.

Step #5 – Determine Allegiance

At this stage, you'll need to determine which House you have membership with, or if you are an apostate.

As a House member you can acquire certain items at a discount, reducing the Cost of these items by -1. The Houses, and the items discounted, are described starting on page 85.

If you choose to play an apostate, you may not make use of any House discounts, but you get the Non-Citizen Stunt (pg. 172) for free.

Step #6 – Determine Starting Rep

Your Rep-Rating determines your standing in the Coalition's Interplanetary Reputation Database (IRD). This determines the quality of the Favors you can request, and what you are allowed to fabricate or acquire in Coalition society.

See page 143 for more on Rep-Ratings.

You start with a Rep-Rating equal to your House Networking Skill +2. You also immediately gain a bump with a Value equal to your Diplomacy.

Note that changes to your Networking Skills after character creation do not affect your Rep-Rating. In addition, unless the GM says otherwise, it is assumed that PCs who know each other at the beginning of play have already bumped or hit each other's Rep-Ratings.

Step #7 – Select Starting Gear

You begin the game with a number of free pieces of gear, such as weapons, armor, and other items.

First, gain a single item with a Cost equal to your choice of Assets or Rep-Rating, +2. You will then gain another item with a Cost equal to either your Assets or Rep, +1. You may then continue to gain items, each with a Cost one lower than the previous: +0, -1, and so on, until the Cost of the free item is 1. You may have any number of items with a Cost rating of 1 or 0.

Unless you have the Licensed Stunt (pg. 172), the maximum number of restricted items you can gain for free during character creation is equal to your Assets +1. Restricted items that come free with others, such as the free unit of ammo that comes with a firearm, do not count against this limit.

Items not selected during this step may be purchased later. See page 141 for purchasing items.

Restricted items can only be purchased with Assets unless you have the Licensed Stunt.

Step #8 – Calculate Stress Boxes

Every character has a Physical and Mental Stress Track. Savants also have a System Stress Track.

Each track has 2 boxes, plus a number of bonus boxes depending on your rank in certain Skills. For each of your relevant Skills ranked 1 to 2, add one additional box. For relevant each Skill ranked 3 to 4 add two additional boxes. A rank of 5 or higher adds three boxes. The Physical Stress Track also gets a number of additional boxes equal to your Size.

Stress Track	**Relevant Skills**
Physical:	Athletics & Endurance + Size
Mental:	Cohesion & Resolve
System (Savant only):	Engineering (Software) & SINC

Character Advancement

Every three game sessions or so, after your character has completed some significant task, they reach a Milestone. The first Milestone reached is a Minor Milestone.

When your character reaches a Minor Milestone, you may choose to do any of the following:

- Swap two Skills in your Skill Set. The two Skills must be within one rank of each other. For example, if you had Firearms at rank 4 and Insight at rank 3, you could switch them for Firearms at rank 3 and Insight at 4.
- Replace an Aspect with another Aspect of your choosing. This requires the GM's permission and should, of course, make sense within the context of the story.

When a Milestone is reached again after the characters have first reached a Minor Milestone, it is a Major Milestone. This is the same as reaching a Minor Milestone, but each character may also select an additional Stunt. Your next Milestone will be Minor, then Major again, and so on in an alternating pattern.

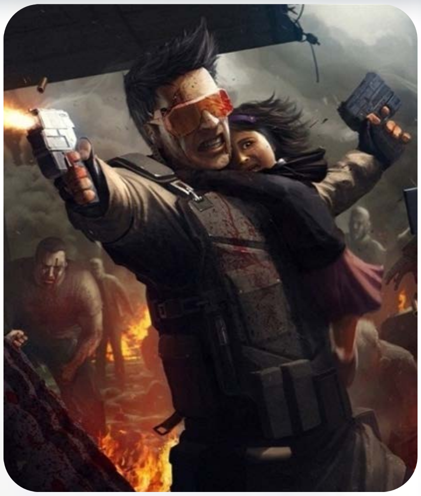
Anders *Trouble Shooter*

- *"I'm gonna make a good life for us Sweetie."*
- *The Coalition Only Offers Freedom in a Cage*
- *Former Enforcer for the Rings of Olympus*
- *"Everything I do, I do for her."*
- *"I know trouble when I see it. And you're trouble."*
- *Non-Citizen*

Allegiance: Apostate

N/A

Rep-Rating



Skills:

Rank 4: Guile, Insight, Resolve

Rank 3: Assets (Pure Bonus), Firearms, Networking (Apostate), Stealth

Rank 2: Intimidation, Networking (House), Diplomacy

Rank 1: Education, Engineering (Hardware), Melee, Pilot, Research (+1), Strategy

Stunts: Refresh: 7

Carpe Diem (Free) – Once per scene, as a Free Action, you can Declare that an Aspect of your choosing exists in the current scene or a zone of your choice. The Aspect must make sense within the context of the scene, and may be vetoed by the GM. You, and only you, may invoke or compel this Aspect for free the first time.

Non-Citizen (Free) – You do not have a Rep-Rating. You gain a +2 bonus on any Favor tests or Asset tests made to acquire goods, information, or services from fellow apostates.

Constant Vigilance – +3 to initiative tests, spend an FP to defend normally when ambushed.

Dodge – Once per scene, you may reduce the amount of stress you receive from a single physical attack by an amount equal to your Athletics +2.

Gun Slinger – The WR of any pistol you wield is increased by +2. When wielding a pistol in each hand, you may perform full-auto or beam attacks using the best WR of the two. If such an attack results in the need to reload or cool your weapon, both weapons are considered out of ammo or overheated. You may reload or cool both weapons as if they were one.

State: Pure

Body Aspect:

Heavily Scarred from Numerous Conflicts

Physical Skills:

Athletics 3, Endurance 2, Perception 3

Gear:

Light Pac Pistol (WR: +4, Beam Wpn, Particle Accelerator, *Small*), **Light Battle Armor** (AR: +3, Computer Gauntlet), **Light Rail-Pistol** (WR: +3, *Armor Penetrating*, *Small*, -2 WR when Silent, Ammo x1**), AR Display Glasses, Backpack, Flashlight, Credisk**

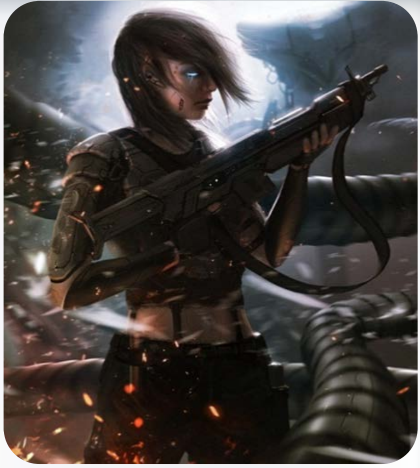
Mental Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 3

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Jane *Soldier of Fortune*



- *Laser Focused on Becoming a Praetorian*
- *"I'm not my mother. I'm just in it for the Rep."*
- *Deceased Mother was a Praetorian*
- *"It's not personal. Call it natural selection."*
- *Legionnaire, Born and Raised*
- *Apotheosized*

Allegiance: House Dalianis (Market Discount: Starships, Railguns, Combat Drones)

6

Rep-Rating

Skills:

Rank 3: Demolitions, Education, Firearms, Intimidation, Melee, Resolve, Strategy (+1)

Rank 2: Assets, Diplomacy, Networking (Apostate), Networking (House), Insight, Engineering (Hardware), Pilot, Research

Rank 1: Cohesion, Guile, Stealth

Stunts: Refresh: 5

Reputable – Your starting Rep-Rating is increased by +2.

Licensed – You may purchase and compile restricted equipment.

Strategist – Spend an FP to gain a +2 bonus on physical attacks tests against one opponent for the duration of the scene. Each time you use this Stunt during this scene, you may apply this bonus to one additional foe. You may not apply the bonus to the same foe twice.

State: Sleeved (Delta Cybersleeve)

Sleeve Aspects:

Synthetic Biology(P, Inhuman Appearance

Physical Skills:

Athletics 4, Endurance 4, Perception 2

Armor Rating: +2 (Does not stack with bonus provided by armor)

Agent (Alpha) Skill Bonuses: Strategy +1

Augmentations:

Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Optimized Power Systems, Bio-Skin Sheath

Neura-Surge – Activate (Endurance, Diff: 4) to perform Instant Action, activation difficulty increases by +1 with each use in the same scene

Skinweave Armor – +1 AR

Subdermal Armor Plating – Enhanced Consequences

Targeting Support System – +1 bonus to firearm attacks with weapons featuring a targeting support module

Reinforced Skeleton – Enhanced Consequences

Mental Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ______________________________

Moderate (-4) ______________________________

Severe(P) (-6) ______________________________

Extreme(P) (-8) ______________________________

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 5

Mild (-4) ______________________________

Moderate (-6) ______________________________

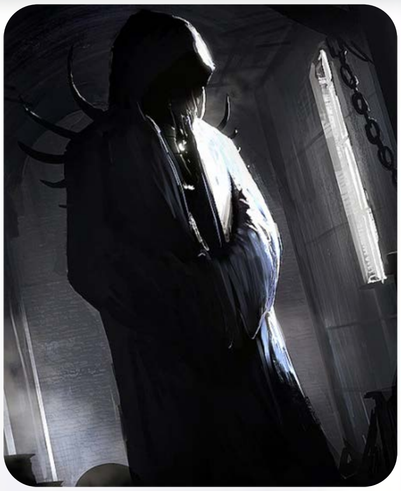
Severe(P) (-9) ______________________________

Extreme(P) (-11) ______________________________

Gear:

Hvy Coil Assault Rifle (WR: +5, Full Auto, Huge, -2 WR when Silent, Modified: Highly Accurate, Ammo x4), **Fragmentation Grenade Template, Frag Grenade x3, Hvy Battle Armor** (AR: +4, Zero-G Assist Jets), **Mono-Edged Short Sword** (WR: 3), **Penetrator Ammo x3, Fiberscope, Backpack, Reinforced Skeleton Aug** (Aftermarket Purchase)

Malpheus *Shadowy Spy Master*



- *"The HPA must be abolished if we are to reach our true potential."*
- *"Your notion of 'Purity' is as childish as it is ridiculous."*
- *Was Killed by the Technophage During the Exodus*
- *SIM Supremacist*
- *Shadowy Network of Contacts and Spies*
- *SIM State(P)*

5

Rep-Rating

Allegiance: House Kimura (Market Discount: Computers, Cybernetic Augmentations, Cybersleeves, Virtuality Software, Agent Software)

Skills:

Rank 3: Assets, Diplomacy (+1), Engineering (Software), Guile, Networking (Apostate), Networking (House), Research (+1)

Rank 2: Cohesion, Education, Insight, Intimidation, Melee, Mnemonics, Pilot, Resolve

Rank 1: Engineering (Hardware), Stealth, Strategy

Stunts: Refresh: 5

SIM State (Free) – You gain the *SIM State(P)* Aspect.

System Slip (Free) – You gain +3 on Stealth tests to avoid being detected on a computer system, and increase the execution difficulty of any Savant Program directed at you by +2.

Agenda Celebrity (Transhumanists) – You are well known in transhumanists circles and gain a +2 bonus any time you request a Favor relating to progressing the transhumanist agenda.

Digital Spider – You gain a +2 bonus on tests to perform Assessments related to a person, place, or thing that can be found on the Extranet.

Inspire Greatness – Once per scene you can grant an ally who can hear you speak a +3 bonus on a single Skill test. This includes attack and defense tests.

State: SIM

Agent (Beta) Skill Bonuses: Research +1, Diplomacy +1,

Physical Skills:
Athletics 2, Endurance 2, Perception 3

SIM Notes:

SIMs require 10 min to change hosts.

Lag Penalties

- <1000 km = No Penalty
- >1000 km, Same System = -2 Penalty
- Different System = -4 Penalty

Mental Stress: ☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 0

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Gear:

Light Pac Pistol Template, Lt. PAc Pistol x3, Beta Agent, Imex V44 Case Spider (pg. 231), **Sensie** (Torture Session feat. Death), **Tele-Presence Sensor Unit, Blank ARID Tags x3, Credisk x3,**

Alexei *Renegade Savant*

- *Looking for Ascension Between Flesh and Synthetics*
- *"The Shadow War isn't about politics, it's… something else."*
- *One of the Last Surviving Members of Magnus IX*
- *Discharged from the Legion After Becoming a Savant*
- *One with the Swarm*
- *Apotheosized*
- *Suffers Crippling Migraines from Mindset Hack*

3

Rep-Rating

Allegiance: House Tsarya (Market Discount: Vehicular and Personal Armor, Ground Vehicles, Warframes)

Skills:

Rank 4: Firearms, Stealth, Engineering (Software)
Rank 3: Cohesion, Intimidation, Strategy
Rank 2: Education, Engineering (Hardware), Insight (+1), Melee, SINC
Rank 1: Assets, Demolitions, Mnemonics, Networking (House), Research, Resolve

Stunts: Refresh: 5

Savant – You can select Savant Programs as Stunts, and gain a SINC rating of 1.

Esper Lord (Savant Program, Free) – You can control a swarm of espers (pg. 180).

Skilled (SINC) – Your SINC Skill Rank is increased by +1.

Oracle Pattering (Savant Program) – You can make reliable predictions of future events (pg. 183).

State: Sleeved (Beta Biosleeve)

Sleeve Aspects:
Gene-Fixed Biosleeve
Synthesized Biological Perfection

Physical Skills:
Athletics 3, Endurance 4, Perception 2

Agent (Alpha) Skill Bonuses: Insight +1

Augmentations:

Apotheosis

Synthesis – Gain *Synthesized Biological Perfection* Aspect.

Gear:

Hvy Coil PDW (WR: +4, Full Auto, -2 WR when Silent, Ammo x1, Penetrator Ammo x3**), Heavy Battle Armor** (AR: +4), **Mono-Edge Dagger** (WR: +2, *Small*), **Flashlight**

Mental Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 4

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

System Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Reagan *Tactical Genius*

- *"When all the fighting is over… what then?"*
- *True Peace Comes in Consolidation and Unity*
- *Hero of Tellerus Fields*
- *Damaging Extranet Video of Brutal Treatment of Apostates*
- *Natural Born Leader*
- *Apotheosis*
- *Aegis III Power Armor*

6

Rep-Rating

Allegiance: House Silva *(Market Discount: Biosleeves, Biotech Augmentations, PAc Weaponry)*

Skills:

Rank 5: Strategy (+1)
Rank 4: Firearms, Networking (House)
Rank 3: Diplomacy, Insight
Rank 2: Assets, Intimidation, Resolve
Rank 1: Cohesion, Demolitions, Education, Guile, Melee, Research

Stunts:

Refresh: 5

Concentrated Fire – Once per scene, when you attack a foe with a ranged weapon, you may direct any ally in the zone you occupy (or an adjacent zone) to fire on your target at the same time you do. Make your attack test as normal. Your chosen ally may also make an attack test as an Instant Action on your turn, against the same target. You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs an FP.

Master Tactician – Once per scene, you may make a Strategy test (Diff: 2) as a Free Action. If you succeed, one Scene or Zone Aspect becomes Persistent for you for the duration of the scene. If you generate Spin, you instead gain the option to attempt a Maneuver as a Free Action. If this Maneuver results in an Aspect, it is Persistent for you for the duration of the scene.

Signature Item (Aegis III Power Armor) – Gain one item, and an Aspect to go with it. You may invoke this Aspect once per scene for free.

Augmentations:

Apotheosis, Striking Looks

Adrenal Boost Module – Activate as Free Action, +2 Athletics and Melee, P.Consequences absorb +1 stress; 3 rounds, gain the *Got the Shakes!* Aspect

Medichine Factory – Heal faster (pg. 219)

Performance Enhanced – +1 Perception

Emergency Life Support (ELS) System – pg. 216

Gear:

Aegis III Powered Hvy Assault Armor (AR: +6, Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, Reinforced Cyber-Musculature, Enhanced Mobility Actuators, Jump Jets, Mag-Traction), **PAc Carbine** (WR: +6, Beam Wpn, Particle Accelerator, *Large,* Modified: *High-End Heatsinks),* **Hell Ball Template, Hell Ball x3**, **Portable Broadcast Power Generator, Medi-Stimulant Injection (MSI) Template, MSI x3, Hvy Rail- Pistol** (Ammo x1), **Gravitic Baton** (WR: +3)**, Ration Lozenge x4, Plasti-Rope Dispenser**

Mental Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐

Mild (-2) ____________________
Moderate (-4) ____________________
Severe(P) (-6) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-8) ____________________

Physical Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 5

Mild (-4) ____________________
Moderate (-6) ____________________
Severe(P) (-9) ____________________
Extreme(P) (-11) ____________________

State: Sleeved (Delta Cybersleeve)

Sleeve Aspects:

Gene-Fixed Biosleeve
Striking Looks

Physical Skills:

Athletics 4, Endurance 4, Perception 4

Agent (Alpha) Skill Bonuses: Strategy +1

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Razor Tongue
Refreshed
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Right Place, Right Time
Savant
Shake It Off
Signature Item
SIM State
Skilled
Slayer
Slippery Combatant
Sniper
Specialized Program
Specialty Aspect
Strategist
System Slip
Tactical Dive
Tenacious
Transhumanist
Vicious Comeback

SAVANT PROGRAMS

Access Memory
Augmented Unreality
Blackout
Delve
Eminent Domain
Esper Lord
Memory Hack
Oracle Patterning
Overload
Pattern Scan
Puppeteer
Security Skim
Stream of Consciousness
System Error
System Invasion

STUNT DESCRIPTIONS

Unless otherwise specified, you may only select a Stunt once.

Academic

You come from an academic background, having spent a great deal of time studying math, science, and history.

You gain a +2 bonus on Education tests to make Declarations related to math, science, or history.

Acrobatic Exploit

You tumble, roll, spin, and twist during combat, leaving your foe to chase after you.

Any time you generate Spin on an attack test, instead of creating an Effect Aspect, you may move into an adjacent zone or attempt to push or pull (pg. 141) your opponent as an Instant Action.

If you choose to move, this is in addition to your normal ability to move as a Free Action on your turn.

Agenda Celebrity

You are well known to those who share a specific agenda. You might be a hero for the Purist cause, a well-known and outspoken transhumanist, a respected and revered Astralist, or a highly regarded member of your House.

Whatever your agenda, you gain a +2 bonus when calling in Favors (pg. 144) that support your agenda.

This bonus does not stack with other Stunts that add bonuses to Favor tests.

All-Seeing Eye

Perhaps you are a master of investigation techniques, or maybe you just have an uncanny eye for detail.

Once per scene, when called on to make a Perception test, you may gain a +3 bonus. This includes attempts to perform Assessments.

Artist

You are exceptionally talented in a specific artistic field, be it painting, sculpting, singing, dancing, or otherwise. You gain a new Aspect that relates to the mastery of your artistic talent.

In addition, you gain a +1 bonus on rolls to request Favors (pg. 144) from people who enjoy your work.

This bonus does not stack with other Stunts that add bonuses to Favor tests.

Assassin Shot

You are trained to compensate for gravity, distance, wind, and other factors that might otherwise spoil a well-placed shot. You know where, and how, to aim to deal the most damage to your opponent with a ranged weapon.

Once per scene, when attacking an ambushed target (pg. 133) with a ranged weapon, you may add a +3 bonus to your attack test.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Assassin Strike

You know how to strike, using a melee weapon, to deal the most damage to your opponent. You know how to get around armor, anticipate your target's movements, and strike at weak spots like vital organs and pressure points.

Once per scene, when attacking an ambushed target (pg. 133) with a melee weapon, you may add a +3 bonus on your attack test.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

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At Home Behind the Stick

You know how to get the most out of your vehicle, pushing it to its limits.

You may spend a Fate Point to make a single Aspect owned by the vehicle you are driving or piloting Persistent, for you only, for the duration of the scene.

You may make any of its other Aspects Persistent for you in this way, but each costs you another Fate Point.

Augment Adept

You are especially adept at managing your sleeve's onboard systems, knowing just how to push it for maximum results.

Once per scene you may invoke any Aspect gained from an Augmentation for free, without spending a Fate Point.

Banner of Hope

Your words and deeds inspire your allies to fight on, urging them to overcome their physical and mental injuries and get back in the fight.

Once per scene, as a Free Action, you may select one ally who can hear you speak. That ally may immediately clear all stress (but not Consequences) he has suffered on a Stress Track of your choosing.

Battlefield Command

At your command, your allies shift to a more advantageous position.

Once per scene, as Simple or Supplemental Action, you may allow any or all allies who can hear your commands to move into a zone adjacent to them, or take cover (pg. 149).

Your allies perform this movement as an Instant Action on your turn. This does not count against the number of Instant Actions they can take during a round.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Blazing Burst

Extensive training has improved the accuracy of your shots, allowing you to aim a PDW accurately when firing with one in each hand.

You gain a +2 bonus on the attack test when you perform a full-auto or beam weapon attack with a PDW in each hand.

Carpe Diem

Special: This Stunt is only available to Pure characters.

Once per scene, as a Free Action, you can Declare that an Aspect of your choosing exists on the current scene or a zone of your choice. The Aspect must make sense within the context of the scene, and may be vetoed by the GM.

You, and only you, may invoke or compel this Aspect for free the first time.

Combat Reload

You are intimately familiar with your firearms, and reloading them is second nature to you.

Once per scene you can reload a railgun or coil gun as a Free Action. This does not help you cool an overheated PAc firearm.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Concentrated Fire

You synchronize your attack with an ally, firing together at the same target.

Once per scene, when you attack a foe with a ranged weapon, you may direct any ally in the zone you occupy (or an adjacent zone) to fire on your target at the same time you do.

Make your attack test as normal.

As an Instant Action, your chosen ally may also make an attack test on your turn against the same target.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Constant Vigilance

You are always on the lookout for trouble.

You get a +3 bonus on any initiative test.

In addition, if you are ambushed, you may spend a Fate Point to defend yourself normally.

Counter Attack

When you generate Spin on a test to defend yourself against a melee attack, or close (same zone) ranged attack, you may forego the option of creating an Effect Aspect to instead perform a melee attack against your attacker as an Instant Action.

This is a single melee attack, either unarmed or with a weapon in hand.

Cover of Darkness

You are at home in the shadows, and know how to use tricks of light to keep yourself hidden.

Zone Aspects that relate to dim light or darkness are always considered Persistent for you.

Crippling Blow

You know how to attack, using your body weight and leverage to land devastating blows against your opponents.

Once per scene, you may increase the Weapon Rating of a melee weapon (or unarmed strike) by +3 on a single melee attack. This bonus may be declared after the attack test is made.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Dead Inside

Your mind has grown numb to the horrors you have endured. Despite terrible emotional trauma, you are able to hold it together, keep cool, and press on.

You have a constant Determination (pg. 127) rating of 2, regardless of the circumstances.

This does not help you resist the potentially damaging effects of fragmentation that comes with resleeving or transforming into a SIM.

Digital Spider

You've been to every corner of the Extranet, and know where to look for obscure information.

You gain a +2 bonus on all Research rolls to perform Assessments related to a person, place, or thing that can be found on the Extranet.

Digitally Evolved

Special: Only available to characters who have also taken the Savant Stunt.

You have managed to modify your ego's code in such a way that, when loaded into a virtual environment, your virtual body is greatly enhanced.

You gain a +2 bonus on Athletics, Endurance, and Perception Skill tests while in a virtuality.

You also gain a +1 bonus on attack tests made using the Firearms or Melee Skills.

Dodge

Bobbing and weaving, ducking and dodging, you nimbly dance out of the way of incoming attacks.

Once per scene, you may reduce the amount of stress you suffer from any single physical attack by an amount equal to your Athletics +2.

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Drone-Jock

You are especially adept at customizing and operating drones. When you purchase this Stunt, you get several benefits:

- The Cost of any drone you attempt to purchase is reduced by -1.
- Whenever you purchase a drone, two of its Skills (your choice) are increased by +1. Once chosen, the Skills the bonuses are applied to cannot be changed.
- Drones that you purchase gain one additional Augmentation Point.

Dual Assault

You are a whirling dervish, your barrage of strikes laying waste to your opponents.

Once per scene, when wielding a melee weapon in each hand (or when unarmed), you may perform a Dual Assault as a Simple Action.

When performing a Dual Assault, make a separate attack with each of your weapons. You may attack a single target twice, or attack two different targets in the zone you occupy.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but no more than once per turn, and each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Ego Stabilization Software

You have a top-of-the-line software suite that constantly edits your ego in small ways to help ensure maximum mental cohesion.

The *SIM State(P)* and *Synthetic Biology(P)* Aspects are not Persistent for you, and you gain a +1 bonus on Cohesion tests to defend against the mental trauma that comes with resleeving.

Fame

You are famous for something. You might host a well-known Extranet show, be a popular template designer, a celebrated politician, or otherwise.

Regardless of where you got your fame, you gain a +2 bonus on attempts to gain Favors (pg. 234) from people who might recognize you.

This bonus does not stack with other Stunts that add bonuses to Favor tests.

Five Minute Friends

Given a chance for five minutes of conversation, you can make a steadfast friend in a place you've never been.

This Stunt makes nearly impossible opportunities to make friends merely improbable and probable opportunities outright certain.

Determine the person you want become friends with and make a Diplomacy test (Diff: 3). If you succeed, you gain a new Lasting Aspect that relates to this person.

You may have a number of Five Minute Friend Aspects equal to your Diplomacy. If you've already reached your limit, and want another "Five Minute Friend" Aspect, you'll need to discard one that you already have.

Forced Advance

Your melee attacks crash down upon your foes with tremendous force.

As part of any melee attack in which you generate Spin, you may elect to forego creating an Effect Aspect and instead engage your opponent in an Athletics (+ Size) contest as a Free Action.

If you succeed, you may force your opponent into an adjacent zone. You may choose to go with him, or stay in your current zone.

Free Runner

You are especially good at navigating your environment on the run, using your momentum to leap, roll, vault, bounce, or slide under obstacles while maintaining your speed.

You gain a +3 bonus on Athletics tests to Hustle or Run.

In addition, you gain a +2 bonus on Athletics-based defense tests during any round in which you Hustled or Ran.

Geek Speak

You are really good at seeding a conversation with just enough techno-babble to baffle, confuse, and deceive others.

You may test your Education instead of Diplomacy or Guile whenever you need to convince someone of a scientific fact, whether it is true or not.

Genius at Work

You have a talent for analyzing a situation and figuring out how to get the most benefit for the least amount of effort. This could mean working out the best way to build a simple tool, or just knowing exactly where to hit (or what to say to) an opponent to make it hurt the most.

When you select this Stunt, select either Education or Insight. Once per scene, you may use that chosen Skill in place of any other Skill on a single test.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first costs a Fate Point.

Grappler

You've mastered a style of martial arts that specializes in ground combat.

You gain a +2 bonus when attempting a grappling-related Block (pg. 134) or Maneuver (pg. 115); or when attempting to push, pull, or throw (pg. 141) an opponent.

Great Captain

You really know how to manage a ship and its crew, pushing both to their limits and beyond.

When serving as the captain of a ship, the ship gains a +1 bonus on all of its Capabilities (pg. 234).

Ground and Pound

Whenever you generate Spin while attempting a grappling-related Block (pg. 134) or Maneuver (pg. 115); or when attempting to push, pull, or throw (pg. 141) an opponent; you may forego creating an Effect Aspect to immediately make a melee attack as an Instant Action against your foe.

The target of this attack must be the same foe you targeted with your Block, Maneuver, or push/pull/throw attempt.

This is a single melee attack, either unarmed or with a weapon in hand.

This attack may not be made with weapons that have the *Large* or *Huge(P)* Aspects.

Gun Slinger

You have trained extensively to fight with handguns, in one hand or both.

The WR of any pistol you wield is increased by +2.

In addition, when wielding a pistol in each hand, you may perform full-auto or beam attacks (using the best WR of the two), even if neither of the pistols you wield is normally capable of such attacks. When performing such an attack, however, the +2 bonus to the weapons WR does not apply.

If a full-auto or beam attack results in the need to reload or cool your weapon, both are considered to be out of ammo or overheated. You may reload or cool both weapons as if they were a single weapon.

Infusion

Special: Only available to characters who have also taken the Savant Stunt.

You have managed to modify your ego's code, adding additional code that mimics one or more pieces of equipment.

This code becomes a part of your ego, and cannot be separated. When you load into a virtuality, you gain the ability to call this equipment into being at will.

Your ego's infused equipment functions just as it would if it were real, and obeys the physical laws of the virtual environment.

Thus, an infused railgun can be used to blow apart objects and people in the virtuality, but an infused flamethrower still could not make fire under water (unless the virtuality had different physics).

You may infuse any number of items so long as their combined Cost does not exceed your SINC Skill rank +5.

You may select this Stunt multiple times. Each time that you do, you may infuse additional items, adding +3 to the total Cost of the items you can infuse.

Also, each time you take this Stunt, you may liquidate the items you have previously infused and infuse a whole new set.

Inspire Greatness

You know how to talk to people to get the best out of them, encouraging them to push beyond their normal limits and achieve greatness.

Once per scene, you may grant an ally who can hear you speak a +3 bonus on a single Skill test, including attack and defense tests.

Licensed

You have somehow obtained a license to acquire restricted equipment, and may do so using your Rep-Rating. (Normally a character must use Assets to acquire restricted items.)

Note that excessive purchasing of restricted items can still result in investigation by authorities. You can get away with fabricating an assault rifle, or even decanting into a restricted sleeve. Attempting to fabricate a half dozen guns or a large quantity of explosives may flag you for investigation.

While restricted equipment is very useful for bartering with apostates, getting caught doing so could result in severe criminal punishment.

A PC who gets caught would likely lose his license. If this happens, the GM should allow the PC to replace this Stunt with another at his next Milestone.

Marksman

You are adept at predicting a target's movement; you know how to lead them, and excel at finding the weak points in an armored target.

You gain a +2 bonus on any tests to Take Aim (pg. 148).

In addition, once per scene, you may reduce your target's Armor Rating by 3 points for the purposes of a single ranged attack.

You may not use a Full Auto or Beam Weapon attack when making this attack.

Master Tactician

You have a remarkable awareness of your surroundings, and always know how to make the best of it.

Once per scene, you may make a Strategy test (Diff: 2) as a Free Action.

If you succeed, one Scene or Zone Aspect becomes Persistent for you for the duration of the scene.

If you generate Spin, you instead gain the option to attempt a Maneuver as a Free Action. If this Maneuver results in an Aspect, it is Persistent for you for the duration of the scene.

Non-Citizen

You are a ghost. Little record of your life exists. You do not show up on most Coalition records and live mostly as an apostate.

It is assumed you have found a way to make it in this world without being tracked by the Coalition, and that you spend a portion of your downtime working to keep your tracks covered. You may need to talk the specifics over with your GM.

You gain the *Non-Citizen* Aspect.

You also do not have a Rep-Rating; skip that phase of character creation. If you need to make use of a Rep-Rating, you'll need to purchase a false CID (pg. 204).

You also gain a +2 bonus on any Assets tests for Favor requests (pg. 144) made to acquire goods, information, or services from fellow apostates.

Passing Attack

You surge past your opponent, striking at them as you pass.

While Hustling or Running (pg. 125), you may make a single melee attack (unarmed or with a melee weapon) against any target in any zone you move through as a Free Action.

Payback

Any time you are physically attacked and suffer a Consequence, you may spend a Fate Point and immediately make an attack against the person who injured you as an Instant Action.

This is a single melee attack, either unarmed or with a weapon in hand, and the target must occupy the same zone.

Precision Strike

You are adept at spotting your foe's weak spots and exploiting them.

Once per scene, you may reduce your target's Armor Rating by 4 points for the purposes of a single melee attack.

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but you must first succeed on a Strategy test (Diff: 2) and pay a Fate Point.

Rapid Strike

You've mastered a form of martial arts that specializes in launching a rapid series of strikes against a single foe.

Once each turn, if you generate Spin while performing an unarmed melee attack, you may forego creating an Effect Aspect to immediately perform an additional unarmed attack against the same opponent.

Razor Tongue

You have a cunning wit and know just what to say to get under someone's skin.

You may spend a Fate Point to add a +3 bonus (or +3 Edge) on your next Guile test made to anger your opponent, possibly forcing him to attack you.

Refreshed

Your Refresh Rating is increased by +1.

You may take this Stunt a total of three times.

Reputable

You've left those who've met you with good impressions, or you've contributed something meaningful to the lives of the people of the galaxy.

Your Rep-Rating is increased by +2.

Right Place, Right Time

You always seem to show up when it matters most, or at least when it's most convenient for you.

You may spend a Fate Point to appear in any scene in which you were not previously present.

Note that the GM may deny the use of this Stunt if you were clearly detained or have no reasonable way of getting there.

Savant

Special: Requires the SIM State Stunt or Apotheosis Augmentation

You have managed to hack your mindset, stripping it of the Coalition-mandated restrictions placed on it by the Humanity Preservation Act.

You gain a rating of 1 in the SINC Skill. During character creation you may improve your SINC Skill by selecting the Skilled Stunt.

After character creation you may improve this Skill like any other, either by swapping its rank with another Skill at a Milestone, or selecting the Skilled Stunt.

You also gain a Savant Program of your choice, and may now purchase additional Savant Programs with the Stunts you get during character creation or from Major Milestones.

In addition, you also gain a new "Disadvantage" Aspect that represents the negative side effects of hacking the mindset. *Glitchy Short-Term Memory, Occasional Uncontrollable Muscle Spasms*, or *Left Eye Severed from Visual Cortex* are good examples of the kinds of Aspects a Savant might have.

This damage to the ego may be repairable in time. Upon achieving any Milestone, you may elect to reduce a Skill of your choice by -1 in exchange for removing this Aspect. The Skill selected may not be reduced to a rating below 0.

Shake It Off

You know how to take advantage of your opponent's mistakes, using them as opportunities to catch your breath and clear your head.

Once per scene, when you generate Spin on a defense test in a physical conflict, you may forego creating an Effect Aspect for the option to clear your Physical Stress Track (but not Consequences).

You may elect to use this Stunt more than once per scene, but each use after the first requires an Endurance test (Diff: 2) and costs a Fate Point.

Signature Item

You gain an item or piece of gear, and an additional “Connection” Aspect related to the item. You may invoke this Aspect once per scene for free.

For example, if your character raises *The Remains of the US Constitution* before a crowd to rally them for battle, she may invoke that Aspect to gain a bonus on her Diplomacy test for free the first time.

Your Signature Item could be a ship, a space station, expensive armor, or even a much-loved sleeve. The Cost of this item generally doesn’t matter, but you must get your GM’s permission to take an item with a Cost rated higher than your Assets or Rep-Rating, x2.

The GM should keep in mind that this item is very meaningful to the character and that a Stunt has been spent to acquire it. That being the case, he should think carefully before presenting a situation where a Signature Item could be lost or taken.

If the item is lost or taken, the character should be given some opportunity to recover the item, take a new item as a Signature Item, or trade this Stunt for another upon reaching his next Milestone.

SIM State

You exist purely as software on a machine. Your home is a virtuality, and you can make it whatever you wish.

Though you do not have a body, you have programs that allow you to view and hear the physical world through mesh sensors. You can generally view non-restricted areas local to the computer system you are running on with little effort.

See page 155 for more about life as a SIM.

The server you are installed on acts as your mindset and provides you with all the benefits of the Apotheosis Augmentation (pg. 213). The software that comprises your identity also consists of your Agent, your SINC (if you are a Savant), and any other software normally housed in the mindset.

You gain the Persistent Aspect *SIM State(P)*. This Aspect represents the fact that you do not have a body. Rather, you view the world through ARIS strips, or via another’s senses if they uplink their feed to your mindset or if you inhabit their SIM-cell module (pg. 222).

The *SIM State(P)* Aspect also represents the tendency for a bodiless ego to fragment over time, and can be compelled during most Cohesion tests.

Skilled

You’ve spent a lot of time honing a particular Skill, becoming better and better with time.

You increase the rank of one of your non-Physical Skills by +1. If you are Pure, you may apply this to a Physical Skill, but must replace this Stunt if you ever resleeve or become a SIM.

You may purchase this Stunt multiple times, but no Skill may be increased to a rating greater than 5.

Any time you pass a Major Milestone, you may change the Skill associated with this Stunt, removing the +1 rank increase and applying it to a different Skill.

Slayer

You specialize in using big weapons for maximum devastation.

Each time you hit a target with a weapon bearing the *Huge(P)* Aspect, but fail to force your foe to suffer a Consequence, you may pay a Fate Point to automatically add +3 to the amount of stress inflicted.

You may only do this once per attack.

Slippery Combatant

You are quick-footed and hard to pin down.

If you generate Spin on a defense test against an attack, you may forego creating an Effect Aspect to instead move to an adjacent zone or take cover as an Instant Action.

This is in addition to your normal ability to move as a Free Action on your turn.

Sniper

You are highly proficient with rifles, and have trained extensively to eliminate targets with a single shot.

When making attacks with a rifle or scoped assault rifle, the Range of your weapon is increased by +3.

In addition, once per scene when an enemy is forced to suffer a Consequence from your shot, you can force them to take a more severe type of Consequence. If they cannot, they may not take any Consequence at all to reduce stress.

For example, if you shoot an enemy and deal 3 points of physical stress, he might elect to reduce that stress by 2 by taking a Mild Consequence.

In that case, you may instead force him to take a Moderate Consequence. If he had already taken a Moderate, he would be forced to take a Severe one, and so on.

Specialized Program

You've spent a great deal of time mastering a specific Savant Program, honing your SINC to a razor's edge,

Select one Savant Program you know. You gain a +2 bonus on attempts to execute that Savant Program.

Specialty Aspect

You are especially good at some specific use of a Skill. You gain a new Aspect that describes this specialty, and this Aspect is linked to a Skill.

You may invoke this Aspect (or it may be compelled) like any other Aspect.

In addition, once per scene you may invoke this Aspect for free on any relevant test using its associated Skill.

For example, if you had the Specialty Aspect *Honey Tongued Seductress (Guile)*, you could invoke it for free once per scene to add a bonus or reroll on a Guile test to seduce someone.

You may take this Stunt up to a total of three times, each time adding Specialty Aspects to the same Skill or different Skills.

Examples of Specialty Aspects

- *Published "SIM-ulated Life" at Age 14 (Education)*
- *Survived Three Weeks Alone in the Forests of Shouye (Insight)*
- *Olympus Fencing Master (Melee)*
- *Former Zero-G Dogfighting Instructor (Pilot)*
- *Moderator on the "Web of Lies" Discussion Board (Apostate Networking)*
- *Coalition-Trained Sniper (Firearms)*
- *Expert in Bio- to Cybersleeve Integration (Mnemonics)*

Strategist

You are adept at seeing and exploiting an enemy's weaknesses in a physical conflict. These might be tendencies to move a certain way, a propensity to telegraph attacks, or a literal chink in his armor.

Spend a Fate Point to gain a +2 bonus on physical attack tests against one opponent for the duration of the scene.

Each time you use this Stunt during this scene, you may apply this bonus to one additional foe.

You may not apply the bonus to the same foe twice.

```
[Versa-Link Log: 10:12-05,11,98]
[Micah] – Is it true what they say about you?
[Alexei] – ?
[Micah] – You're a Savant.
[Micah] – How'd you do it? How did you get free of the restrictions.
[Alexei has disconnected]
```

System Slip

As a SIM, you know how to hide in a network. By changing file names, rewriting your position on storage devices, and creating digital red herrings, you are able to thwart attempts to find you and target you in a system.

Detecting a specific SIM on a host system is generally a Research vs. Stealth contest. If you have this Stunt, you gain a +2 on these Stealth tests.

In addition, you also increase the execution difficulty of any Savant Program directed at you by +2.

Tactical Dive

Diving through the air, you fire at your opponents before landing in a controlled roll and regaining your feet.

Once per scene, you can both move into an adjacent zone and perform a ranged attack with a single Simple Action. If you can take cover in the zone you end in, you may take cover as a Free Action.

This is in addition to the Free Action you normally get, which you can spend moving a second time if you wish.

Tenacious

You have exceptional mental stability, and are able to shrug off trauma and horrors that would leave others weeping on the floor.

The amount of mental stress each Consequence allows you to ignore is increased by +1.

Transhumanist

You know which brands of Augmentations work best with each other, and are adept at customizing a sleeve for maximum efficiency.

Sleeves you purchase have two additional Augmentation Points, and the maximum number of Augmentations your sleeve can support is increased by +1.

Vicious Comeback

You always have a witty retort or vicious criticism chambered and ready to go.

Once per scene, on a test to defend yourself in an argument or debate (mental conflict), you may perform a mental attack against your opponent as an Instant Action.

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SAVANT PROGRAMS

The Savant's special abilities are all derived from a unique programming language that he has been able to develop since cracking the restrictions on his mindset (pg. 62). This programming language is called Self-Interfacing Neural Code (SINC). Cracking the mindset is a very dangerous procedure, but once complete, the Savant gains the ability to interface with computer systems in ways a normal person cannot.

The type of hacking performed by the Savant when executing a Savant Program is aided by the Savant's Agent, or Daemon. The Savant executes the SINC, and his Daemon unloads a barrage of SINC-based intrusion programs that flood the targeted system, smashing a hole through its security just long enough for the Savant to seize control.

Modern computer systems are built using Mimir-tech, and as a result are secured using dedicated AIs. The window of access the Savant can obtain in these systems is short-lived, usually lasting no more than a few seconds.

The Savant Programs in this chapter are special Stunts that represent the programs that Savants are able to compile from their SINC.

Before you can gain any Savant Programs, you must first purchase the Savant Stunt (pg. 173). Savant Programs can then be chosen like other Stunts, either during character creation or upon reaching a Major Milestone.

SINC is a very personal part of the character, partially derived from, and interfacing directly with, the code that makes up the Savant's ego. It can't be copied or traded, and is backed up along with the ego itself. You can execute Savant Programs as long as you are in a sleeve with the Apotheosis Augmentation or on a computer capable of hosting your ego as a SIM.

Savant Programs

Access Memory – Access memories from a person's mnemonic core.

Augmented Unreality – Cause the target to perceive augmented reality objects in a way they may believe to be real.

Blackout – Damage the link between the target's mindset and brain, rendering them blind.

Delve – Gain access to a person's secured records, allowing you to make Assessments or Declarations about them.

Eminent Domain – Take temporary control over computer-controlled parts of your environment.

Esper Lord – Control a swarm of nanomachines.

Memory Hack – Edit memories stored on a mnemonic core.

Oracle Patterning – Your Daemon makes reliable predictions of the future by processing available data.

Overload – Cause the target's mindset to generate pain.

Pattern Scan – Your Daemon constructs reliable reports about past events based on available information.

Puppeteer – Improve your use of drones, and/or control drones that don't belong to you.

Security Skim – Access security data to hear and view other places.

Stream of Consciousness – Intercept the flow of data between the target's brain and mindset to hear surface thoughts.

System Error – Launch a direct attack against a target's systems.

System Invasion – Gain access to secured systems.

Execution Difficulty

When you wish to use a Savant Program, you must make a SINC test against the Program's execution difficulty.

If you succeed, you can use the Program.

If you fail, the Program still activates but you suffer an amount of system stress equal to the amount by which you failed. If you Stall, you suffer the stress and the Program fails to activate.

Upgrades

Some Savant Programs can be upgraded by purchasing the Program additional times. The upgrades may make the Program more effective, reduce the execution difficulty, or allow you to use the Program in new ways.

Unless otherwise specified, you may only purchase a specific upgrade a single time

Access Memory

Execution Difficulty: 3 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

When you run this Program, you are able to hack into another person's mnemonic core and retrieve stored data. This data includes records of thoughts and sensory data from previous experiences.

To execute this Savant Program, make a SINC test against a difficulty equal to your target's SINC or Software Engineering (target's choice), +3. If your execution test generates Spin, the target will not be aware of your intrusion attempt. Otherwise, he or his Agent detects the intrusion attempt.

If you successfully execute this Program, you gain a single-word answer to a question of your choosing. If the target does not know the answer, the response should simply be "Unknown."

If you generate Spin on the execution test, you may forego the creation of an Effect Aspect to gain an answer consisting of a few sentences. Alternatively, the probing character may experience an entire scene that the target was present for as if the prober had been there himself.

Succeeding with 5 or more Shifts results in the probing character learning just about any fact the target knows or gains the ability to experience several days of the target's life.

Augmented Unreality

Execution Difficulty: 1 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

Duration: Permanent until dismissed

You are able to hijack the sensory data passing through your target's mindset (or host system in the case of a SIM), causing him to see objects that aren't real. Though they do not make any sounds, these AR illusions can move and are detailed enough to pass for real objects when viewed from any angle. Legal computer systems are normally restricted from being able to display realistic AR objects to avoid confusion or dangerous situations, so the ability to do so whenever you please can be incredibly useful. The illusion may move at any speed, but disappears if you lose sight of it.

To create the AR illusion, you must first execute this Program. If you Stall on your execution test, your target will be made aware of the intrusion attempt.

The difficulty of the Perception test needed to notice that the illusion isn't real equals 2 plus the number of Shifts generated on the test to execute this Program. A bad execution test might result in an illusion that flickers, or has colors that just don't look quite right.

Any time an observer rolls to pierce a moving illusion, he gains a +2 bonus. However, tests to execute this program that generate at least 1 Shift are almost always passably believable, and rolls to pierce the illusion should only be allowed if the observer has a reason to be wary of illusions, such as if an illusion isn't registering to senses or sensors that it should, or if the illusion is behaving in a strange way.

For example, an illusion of a garbage bin on a street corner should not call for a test to notice what it is. On the other hand, passing your hand through an illusion of an unmoving man would probably allow the observer to pierce the illusion without rolling.

The most basic illusion is the same size as a human adult (Size 0) or smaller. To make larger illusions, you suffer a -1 test penalty per ascending Size category.

Upgrades

Auditory Feedback: The AR illusions you create can produce sounds of your choosing.

Blackout

Execution Difficulty: 3 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

By interfering with the interface between your target's sleeve and mindset (or ego and host system), you can cause a disruption that temporarily blinds the victim.

If you successfully execute this Savant Program, you place the Persistent Aspect *Blind(P)* on your target for an amount of time (pg. 149) equal to the number of Shifts generated.

For example, if you generate 2 Shifts, the target will be blinded for a scene.

Upgrades

Oubliette: Successful use of this Program severs the target's sense of hearing as well as sight. The target gains the Persistent Aspect *Blind and Deaf(P)* instead of *Blind(P)*.

Lock Down: When you execute this Program, you may increase the execution difficulty by +2 to attempt to freeze the target in place. If you still manage to execute the Program, the target may not take any physical actions and gains the Frozen(P) Aspect until the end of the scene.

The target may attempt to break free by spending a Fate Point and rolling his SINC or Software Engineering against a difficulty equal to your SINC.

Delve

Execution Difficulty: 2 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

In most cases, when you look at a person while wearing an AR interface device, your system reads their CID and offers up some basic facts about the person. This usually consists of an AR window hovering beside the person's head, which contains whatever info the person wishes to be displayed.

This Program allows you to go deeper, cracking the security that keeps you from additional facts about the person. Successful use of this Program may grant you access to personal messages, Rep-logs, and other information.

When successfully executed, Delve allows you to use your SINC (with a +2 bonus) to perform a Declaration (pg. 117) or Assessment (pg. 116) on a person with a CID.

In addition, a successful Delve will immediately determine if a CID is fake.

Eminent Domain

Execution Difficulty: 3+, depending on circumstance

Activation Time: Simple Action

Duration: One Round or One Use (See below)

For a brief moment, you seize control of the systems that operate the machines in the world around you, forcing them to obey your commands.

You can unlock computer-controlled doors, close gates, fire sentry guns, surge gravity generators, cause environmental systems to vent room atmospheres, and more.

When you activate this Program, you can make a Declaration (pg. 117) regarding the computer systems in the area. In some cases, this Declaration should result in an Aspect like *Zero-G* or *Lights Out!*

Other times the Declaration might be a simple statement of fact about something in the world nearby, such as Declaring a door to be suddenly unlocked or that an ARIS strip has stopped working.

Certain items may be more heavily secured than others, especially those that maintain the status quo or uphold the HPA. For example, attempting to override the restrictions on a compiler increases the difficulty by +3.

The effects of Eminent Domain are fleeting, generally only lasting a single round (or granting one use in the case of something like a compiler) before the security AI detects the intrusion and shuts you out.

Esper Lord

Execution Difficulty: Varies depending on commands

Activation Time: Simple Action

This Program is the result of many hours of writing code designed to interface your mind with a swarm of nanomachines, allowing you to control them with your thoughts in real time. The swarm is a mass of millions of microscopic spherical machines (espers) sporting arrays of retractable arms. By itself, a single esper is useless, but by expanding and retracting its arms, it can intelligently arrange itself in relation to other espers. The swarm as a whole can take nearly any shape: flowing mist or liquids, or solid objects like walls, stabbing blades, or even clothing.

Your esper swarm, which you get for free, generally needs to stay fairly close to you, not venturing more than 20 meters away and staying within line of sight.

Each command given to your swarm requires an execution of the Esper Lord Program. The action itself takes place as part of the Simple Action required to execute the Program.

The execution difficulty depends on what you are directing the swarm to do (see below). The following sections describe how your swarm can be commanded to perform some common actions:

Attack

Your swarm can be used to attack a target directly, either by slamming into him, striking as a razor-sharp stabbing tentacle, flowing over and devouring the target, surrounding and grappling him, and so on.

To make an attack, you must first select one of the attack forms described below. Each form of attack has a different execution difficulty listed in parenthesis. Once you've made your selection, make an execution test. Once executed, you can attack as described in the attack form you selected.

Slam (1): Your swarm configures itself into a solid tentacle-like shape and smashes into the target. Make an attack test with your SINC. The attack has a WR of +4, and has an Aspect of *Smashing Force*.

Stab/Slash (2): Your espers take the shape of a large stabbing blade or multiple small blades, which stab and slash at your target. Make an attack with your SINC. The attack has a WR of +6, and has an Aspect of *Razor Sharp Blades*.

Grapple (1): Wrapping around your foe, your swarm attempts to perform a Block Action (pg. 134) to restrain; or push, pull, or throw (pg. 141) your opponent. Your esper swarm can also perform ranged versions of these combat actions. In these cases, Skill tests use SINC instead of the usual Skill required.

Devour (3): Your swarm flows over your target, seeping into armor and ripping at his flesh and/or sensitive components. Make an attack with your SINC. The attack has a WR of +4, ignores any Armor Rating, and has an Aspect of *Devouring Nanomachines*.

Defense

You can command your swarm to interpose itself between you and an incoming attack, during which the swarm configures itself into a rigid form to absorb the blow or energy.

When using your swarm for defense, you must first execute your Esper Lord Program. Once you've done that, select one of the forms of defense described below. Each form of defense has a different execution difficulty listed in parenthesis.

Defend (1): You may use your SINC instead of the normal Skill you would use to defend against a physical attack. In this case, you may execute this Program as an Instant Action.

Block (2): Your espers swarm around you, creating a protective barrier. You may use your SINC to perform a Block Action (pg. 134).

You can extend your Block to cover another person instead of, or in addition to, yourself. This extension increases the execution difficulty by +1 per person in addition to yourself.

Your Block may cover an entire zone by increasing the activation difficulty by +2.

Perform Maneuver

You can use your swarm to place an Aspect on yourself or another person, place, or thing. This act is like performing a Maneuver with any other Skill (pg. 115), but requires you to first execute the Esper Lord Program. In this case, the execution difficulty is 2, but the GM might increase it if you attempt to perform especially difficult or complex Maneuvers.

These Aspects typically last as long as other Aspects created by performing Maneuvers, so long as you don’t need to use your swarm for something else.

Once your swarm has been activated, if you perform a Maneuver that requires a contest with your opponent, test your SINC against their relevant Skill.

Templating

Your swarm can assume the shape of any object you have a fabrication template for. This automatically includes almost any basic shape with a Cost of 2 or less, such as a chair or shovel. The swarm can maintain this shape until instructed to change form.

The swarm is incapable of taking the form of another type of electronic device, such as a computer system. It also cannot take the form of an object that requires power to function, such as a coil gun or gravitic weapon.

Commanding your swarm to take on a new shape requires an execution test with an execution difficulty (minimum of 2) equal to the Cost of the item your swarm will mimic.

Manipulation

Your swarm can be commanded to wrap around an object and manipulate it. This requires an execution test (Diff: 1).

When manipulating an object, the swarm has an Athletics Skill equal to your SINC.

An attempt to manipulate an unwilling creature is considered a grappling attack (see “Attack – Grapple” above).

Upgrades

Area Attack: You can attempt to attack everyone in a zone. When doing this, increase the execution difficulty for the chosen attack form by +2.

You need only execute the Program once, but you must make a separate attack against each target.

Armor: Gain another Defense option: Armor (2). Your swarm can wrap around you, taking the shape of a suit of armor. When worn in this manner, your swarm provides you with an Armor Rating equal to your SINC rating +2.

It can remain in this form until used for some other purpose.

Deadly Swarm: You gain a +2 bonus on attack and grapple tests made by your swarm.

Manipulative: When attempting to manipulate an object or make a grapple attack with your swarm, your SINC is considered to be 2 ranks higher.

This does not affect the execution test itself, but is added whenever you test SINC in place of Athletics.

Sensory Feed: Your swarm is capable of sending audio and video data back to you. This has an execution difficulty of 3. Once executed, you can hear and see from the perspective of any portion of your swarm.

In addition, the range at which you can operate your esper swarm is increased to 1 km.

Damaging the Swarm

Some of your opponents may try to get clever and attack your swarm directly. In this case, the swarm is assumed to have Physical Skills equal to your SINC +2.

Similar to the way regular characters can suffer Consequences to reduce stress, your swarm can suffer Deteriorations.

Your swarm can suffer a Deterioration with a rating of 2, 4, and 6 before being destroyed. You may only have one Deterioration of each rating. When the swarm takes a Deterioration, it decreases the amount of stress it suffers from the current attack by an amount equal to the Deterioration's rating.

In addition, the controlling Savant adds the rating of the worst Deterioration his swarm has suffered to the execution difficulty of any action he tries to make his swarm perform.

Versatile Armor: You must first purchase the Armor Upgrade. Whenever your swarm takes the form of armor, you may assign to it any two of the following features: Enhanced Mobility Actuators, High Density Plating, Hydrostatic Gel Layer, Integrated Weaponry (Mono-Edge Shortsword), Reinforced Cyber-Musculature, or Vacuum Sealed and Shielded.

Memory Hack

Execution Difficulty: 3 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Extended (One hour per test)

This Program allows you to edit the mind in a manner similar to mnemonic editing, but uses techniques only possible with the aid of a Daemon. Normal Agents are restricted from attempting overt mnemonic editing, but a Daemon has no such limitations.

Instead of targeting parts of the ego's personality or attempting to repair "fragmentation," this Program specifically targets stored memories of events.

While using this Savant Program takes time and care, it allows you to access and edit memories stored on the target's mnemonic core. While this has no immediate effect on the target, if he is ever restored from the hacked backup, these edited memories will exist in place of the old ones.

It takes time to perform memory edits, and you must have access to the target's mnemonic core and mindset (usually via his data jack) the entire time. After an hour of work, you may attempt to execute this Savant Program.

Success allows you to erase the events of a single scene of little personal importance to the victim. For example, you could force him to forget where he hid his weapons cache, but you couldn't make him forget the last few moments he had with his dying father.

If you generate Spin, your may forego the creation of an Effect Aspect to erase about a day of time, or you might be able to erase the memory of a scene that was important to the character.

If you beat the execution difficulty by 5 or more, you may erase about a month of time, or a week that was very important to the character.

The memories erased must be in a single period of time per use. While you may be able to erase the events of a day from a character's mind, you could not erase twelve hours' worth of time spread over the course of a month, taking only an hour or two at a time.

The effects of this Program are permanent.

You may also elect to replace the memories you remove with new memories of your own creation. Generally these memories are absorbed into the consciousness and remain unquestioned unless something happens to draw attention to their false nature.

If for some reason the memories are questioned, the victim may make a Cohesion test. The difficulty of this test is usually 2, but may be higher or lower depending on how well the edited events match up with the character's normal routine.

Continued on next page…

If the character succeeds, he is able to identify the edited memories as false.

Upgrades

Flash Memory: You are capable of editing memories in real time. This process causes mental stress that burns out the real memories, which are then replaced with sensory data created with the aid of your Daemon.

When using this upgrade the execution difficulty is increased by +2, requires only a Simple Action, and takes effect in both the "live" ego and the backup.

Success also indicates that the target must suffer a Mild Mental Consequence. If you generated Spin, the target must suffer a Moderate Mental Consequence. If you succeed by 5 or more, the target suffers a Severe Mental Consequence.

In all other ways, using Flash Memory works exactly like Memory Hack.

```
[Mindset[LOX]: J945JF.2MF.9; 06:43:15-04,21,97]
[ALEXEI] RUN:TARGETACQUISITION/ANA
  [DAEMON/LOX] TARGET CONFIRMED
[ALEXEI] RUN: SWARM.IMPALE/ATK
[ALEXEI] --REPEAT--
  [DAEMON/LOX] "He appears to be dead, sir."
[ALEXEI] "Indeed. New target. Ah!"
  [DAEMON/LOX] //INJURY DETECTED//
[ALEXEI] RUN:TARGETACQUISITION/ANA
  [DAEMON/LOX] TARGET CONFIRMED
[ALEXEI] RUN: KILLABITCH/FLAY/ATK
  [DAEMON/LOX] //MEDICHINES DEPLOYED//
[ALEXEI] RUN: RESTRAIN/DEF
[ALEXEI] RUN: KILLABITCH/FLAY/ATK
{{ERROR!! MEMORY ALLOCATION FAULT 394.756.1}}
[ALEXEI] --REPEAT--
  [DAEMON/LOX] "The target has been disabled, sir."
[ALEXEI] RUN: CAPTURESENSIE/UTI
  [DAEMON/LOX] //SENSIE RECORDING//
[ALEXEI] RUN: KILLABITCH/FLAY/ATK
```

Oracle Patterning

Execution Difficulty: 4 (Potentially modified by Mesh Aspects)

Activation Time: Simple Action

Your Daemon is armed to the virtual teeth with cutting edge intrusion software. The moment you enter a meshed area, it begins subtly working its way into the stream of data flowing through the mesh. This is a routine function of your Daemon, and requires no direct effort on your part.

When you execute this Program, your Daemon launches a barrage of data-gathering queries that attempt to access any and all security data, public records, private records, psychological profiles, historical and sociological studies, local laws, cultural behaviors, and any other data it can use to piece together a prediction of future events regarding a specific topic.

Successfully executing this Program means the character's Daemon will be able to use the collected data to predict some future event with a high degree of accuracy.

The GM should ask the player what he wishes to know about coming events. Denser local meshes will yield more data to the Daemon, which will increase the accuracy of the potential result. Thus, Mesh Aspects could modify the execution test.

The more specific the question, and the more Shifts generated, the more accurate the information the GM should relate back. The player should also keep in mind that this is the most likely future, but the Daemon isn't truly psychic and unknown factors could still play a part.

Mesh Aspects

Mesh Aspect	Description
Unmeshed(P)	No local mesh. Areas with no local mesh sensors or Monitor, or an ultra-secure area that uses wired connections. Many devices and Savant Programs work better with mesh access, so not having a mesh connection can sometimes lessen their capabilities.
Low Density Mesh	Typical rating associated with "the streets." Sensors are affixed to buildings, posts, and so on.
Standard Density Mesh (As this is the standard mesh type for Coalition controlled areas, no Aspect is needed.)	The average household or small House subsidiary. Every room is monitored with the exception of storage closets and bathrooms. Data is generally stored for 72 hours unless the Monitor marks the activity as unusual. If flagged in such a way, the owner will be notified.
High Density Mesh(P)	Any building in which sensitive activities take place, including most House facilities. Every room is monitored and collected data is stored for months.

Overload

Execution Difficulty: 3 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

Duration: Scene, or until awakened

When you execute this Program, you cause your target's mindset (or host system) to discharge a wave of corrupt sensory data into his ego. This feedback is strong enough to knock your target unconscious or force him to freeze up if he is in a SIM State.

The target must either have a mindset or be a SIM.

Once unconscious or frozen, the victim may spend a Fate Point each round to make a Cohesion test (Diff: 2) in an attempt to rouse himself. If he is attacked or shaken violently, he may make the Cohesion test without needing to spend a Fate Point.

Upgrades

Power Surge: You may trigger fluctuations in the power systems in a powered object you can see.

To use this Program, it must first be executed. The effect of the attack and the Weapon Rating depend on the nature of the target. Once activated, you may make an attack with your SINC using the WR listed below.

Drones, cybersleeves, and vehicles suffer an attack with a WR of +6. The target defends with Endurance or Systems, adding Size. Armor does not add bonuses.

Weapons, armor, and cybernetic augs release a burst of power and cease to function until their power cell resets. This takes 1 full round. The person holding/wearing the target suffers an attack with a WR of +3. They may defend with Endurance. While the AR provided by armor can help the target resist such an attack, the AR cannot be added if the armor itself is targeted.

Pattern Scan

Execution Difficulty: 4 + Intel Modifiers (Potentially modified by Mesh Aspects)

Activation Time: Simple Action

When you execute this Program, your Daemon launches a series of queries to obtain as much data as possible regarding specific events. This includes security data logs, video feeds, blogs, real time Extranet broadcasts, recorded conversations, or any other stored information that might relate to the specified event. Once gathered, your Daemon congregates this data and attempts to piece together the most likely course of events that took place.

Successfully running this Program allows your Daemon to compile enough data to show you a specific moment in the past of a specific person, place, or thing. You should tell the GM what you wish to know about the subject. Asking a more specific question and/or generating more Shifts on the execution test should prompt the GM to provide more accurate information.

To execute this Program, perform a SINC test as a Simple Action against an execution difficulty equal to 4 + any relevant Intel Modifiers (pg. 186) Denser meshes at the site of the event, person, place, or thing from the past will yield better potential results. Thus, Mesh Aspects could modify the execution test.

If you fail but don't Stall, or succeed with 0 Shifts, you are only able to review a few seconds of time, and the result might not be very reliable.

If you succeed with 1 Shift, you can see up to a minute and can be sure the result is pretty close to how events actually happened.

Spin lets you see a whole scene, and the result is accurate.

Puppeteer

Execution Difficulty: 2, or Drone's Resolve +1.

Duration: Until cancelled or 1 round

Activation Time: Simple Action

You have mastered the ability to possess a drone (pg. 229), passing your awareness into it. This Program allows you to sense what it senses as if you were wearing it as a sleeve.

To possess a drone, you must first execute this Program.

If you own the drone and have full access to it, the execution difficulty is 2 and you can possess the drone for the duration of the scene.

If you do not own the drone, the execution difficulty is equal to the drone's Resolve +1. You remain in possession of the drone for a single round, but may immediately attempt to execute this Program again to remain in control. Doing so is a Free Action at the end of the round.

When in active control of a drone, the drone gains a +2 bonus on all Skill tests instead of the normal +1 bonus. You view the world from the drone's perspective, seeing what it sees, hearing what it hears, and so on. However, you cannot see or hear out of your own eyes or ears (or synthetic equivalents) while possessing a drone.

In addition, upon successfully possessing the

drone you gain 2 Fate Points. These temporary Fate Points may only be used to invoke the drone's Aspects. These Fate Points disappear if not used before "exiting" the drone.

Upgrades

Drone Lord: You may possess drones you own without having to execute this Program.

Tenacious Master: Once in possession of a drone you do not own, you gain a +2 bonus on tests to maintain possession.

Security Skim

Execution Difficulty: 2 + Intel Modifiers (Potentially modified by Mesh Aspects)
Activation Time: Simple Action
Duration: Scene

When you execute this Program, your Daemon launches a series of queries to obtain as much data as possible from any and all security systems it can access. People, places, or things well-known to you are easier to find. Once found, you can view them through mesh sensors local to them.

Perform a SINC test to execute this Program (Diff: 2) and add the single most appropriate Familiarity and Link Modifier from the Intel Modifiers table (see sidebar). Denser meshes at the target location yield more data to the Daemon, allowing for a more accurate result. Thus, Mesh Aspects could modify the execution test.

Once located, you know exactly where your target is in relation to yourself, and you may "drift away" from the target by hopping from security feed to security feed. You can view areas up to a number of meters from the original target equal to your (SINC +1) x100.

Your displaced senses last for the duration of the scene, or until willingly returned to normal.

Intel Modifiers

Person

Modifier	Familiarity
+6	Heard a description of the person.
+4	Seen a picture of the person.
+2	Met the person once.
+1	Person is an acquaintance.
+0	Person is a close friend.
Link Modifier:	
+2	You do not know the person's name.

Thing

Modifier	Familiarity
+6	Heard a description of it
+4	Seen a picture of it
+2	Held or used it once.
+1	Held or used it often.
-1	The object is something of personal importance to you.

Place

Modifier	Familiarity
+6	Heard a description of the place.
+4	Seen the place on a map or seen a picture of the place.
+2	Been to the place once.
+1	Frequent the place often.
+0	Personal property, you can see the place, or you know exactly where it is in relation to yourself

Event

Modifier	Familiarity
+6	Heard about the event.
+3	Heard or read a description of what happened at the event.
+2	Witnessed a very similar event.
+1	Frequently witness very similar events.
+0	The event happened to you.
Link Modifier:	
-3	Currently at the place where the event happened.

Stream of Consciousness

Execution Difficulty: 2 + highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

Duration: One round or scene, see below

When executed, this Program uploads a virus into the mindset of the target. Once the virus is installed, you are able to tap into the part of the target's mindset that listens to and interprets thought. Such viruses are generally eradicated quickly, but for a short time you can listen in on the thoughts of another.

If you successfully execute this Program, you may hear the target's next few surface thoughts in your mind as if they were speaking them out loud to you.

If you generate Spin, you may forego the creation of an Effect Aspect to hear the target's thoughts for the rest of the scene.

If you Stall, the target's Agent senses the attempted intrusion and can inform the target of the general direction from which it came.

Use of this Program may also allow you to discover one of the target's Aspects if it is relevant to the situation and his current thoughts.

If an Aspect is discovered by this Program, the user may invoke or compel it for free the first time. Depending on the Aspect and the circumstances, this Aspect may be very fragile and could go away depending on the situation and how it changes.

Upgrades

Voyeur: Even if you Stall when executing this Program, you never alert your target. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus on execution tests when targeting someone you have used this Program on before.

System Error

Execution Difficulty: Highest of target's SINC or S. Engineering

Activation Time: Simple Action

Your Daemon launches a barrage of intrusion attempts to overwhelm the target system, forcing it to divert system resources to handle the onslaught. This can cause the target system to become unstable, lock up, or even shut down entirely.

This attack can be used against anyone with a System Stress Track or actively functioning cybernetic Augmentations.

When you execute this Program, you may choose one of three following effects:

System Attack: If your target is another Savant, you may choose to deal an amount of stress to the target's System Stress Track equal to the number of Shifts you generate when executing this Program, +2. For example, if the execution difficulty was 3, and you generated 2 Shifts, your target would take 4 points of system stress.

Hardware Failure: You may cause a cybernetic Augmentation that has an active function, such as a cybernetic limb or implanted weapon, to become damaged or stop functioning.

This attack can also be used on other machines, such as drones, but has no effect on passive Augmentations like subdermal armor.

The target suffers an amount of physical stress equal to the number of Shifts generated. Armor does not help. If the target suffers a Consequence, this Consequence should relate to one of his Augmentations, which will not work until the Consequence is cleared.

Ego Strike: This is a direct attack against an Apotheosized ego, be it running on a mindset or existing as a SIM on a host system. The target must be visible in some way, either in the flesh or ghosting in AR.

The target suffers mental stress equal to number of Shifts generated.

System Invasion

Execution Difficulty: 4 or 3 + Highest of target's SINC or S. Eng

Activation Time: Simple Action

You launch a direct attack against another system to seize control of it. If successful, you can control the system from afar. This Program allows you to control computer systems, drones, and even Apotheosized people!

With an Apotheosized person or drone, success allows you to implant a single-word command, such as "Flee!" The target will try to obey the command until the end of the scene.

With a computer system, you gain limited access to the file system and can view any files that are available to an authorized user.

If you generate Spin, you can forego the creation of an Effect Aspect to gain the ability to implant a simple sentence command in a drone. Examples include: "Go stand in the corner," or "Target Omniplex employees." The target will try to obey the command for an hour.

Generating Spin can also gain you greater access to a computer system. You can view any files available to an authorized user of the system and also have writing privileges. You can create new files, but you cannot edit existing ones.

If you generate 5 or more Shifts, you gain the ability to implant a command in a drone consisting of several sentences, capable of relating a series of steps. The target will try to obey the command for up to a week.

If targeting a computer system, you gain complete control of the system. However, in all modern computers it is still impossible to modify the core of the OS—the sections designed by Mimir. See page 53 for more on Mimir-tech.

Upgrades

Usurper: You can force Apotheosized minds to obey the same sorts of commands you can force drones to obey.

In this case, the execution difficulty is based off the higher of the target's Cohesion, S.Eng, or SINC.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.5/ 4:16-03,18,98]

[Alexei] – How did you find me?

[Micah] – It wasn't easy. Thanks for talking with me.

[Alexei] – What do you want?

[Micah] – I want to be like you. I want to free my mindset, become a Savant.

[Alexei] – It doesn't work that way. You have to discover it for yourself. It's different for everyone. And it's dangerous. I wouldn't teach you if I could.

[Micah] – That's what you all say.

[Alexei] – Because it's true.

[Micah] – They say you're Mimir's Chosen. They say Mimir is a prophet, or an angel. He is the hand of God, and you are his hosts. He sees and hears the world through us Apotheosized, we are his children.

[Alexei] – Creepy bullshit. I don't have room in my head for an angel. It's crowded enough with just me and Lox.

[Micah] – So you don't believe it. Funny how most Savants don't.

[Alexei] – Hilarious

[Micah] – I'm sorry for wasting your time. I'll go.

[Alexei] – Look kid. You want answers, you've got to look deeper. You won't find truths on the surface. You won't find them in popular opinion or the latest trends. Question. Yourself, others, and anything anyone tells you that you *must* do, think or believe. I'm not telling you to disobey, defy or rebel; but to question. Act not because you are told to, but because you see the wisdom in doing so.

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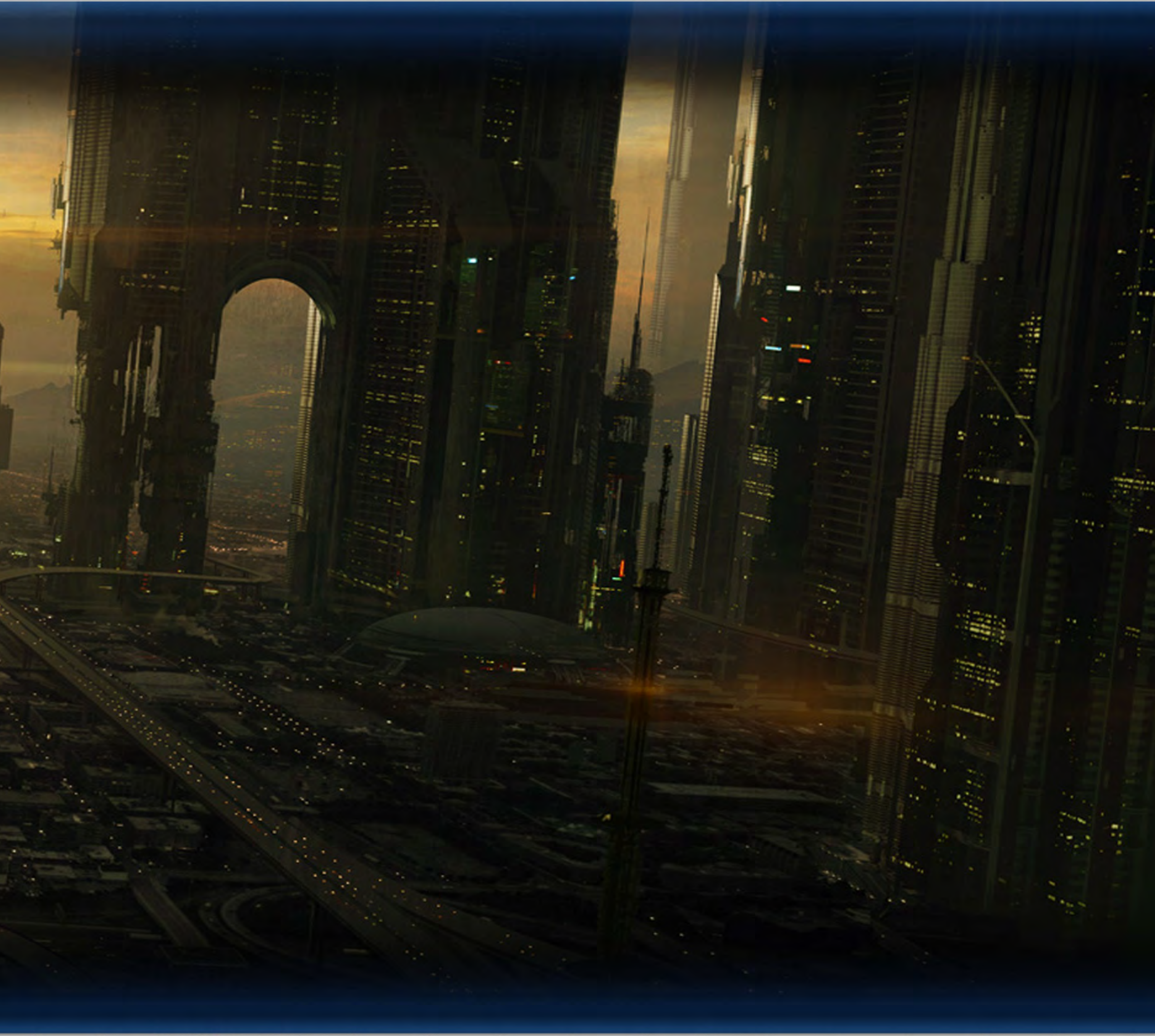
GEAR



WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY

In Coalition space, guns and most other weapons are illegal to possess or fabricate by civilians. Nearly all compilers are restricted from fabricating weapons, and this restriction is nearly impossible to bypass.

An unrestricted compiler capable of producing weapons is an asset many apostate factions would literally kill to acquire, and more than once the Coalition has aimed a kill-sat at a location thought to be housing one. Such a thing is exceedingly rare and valuable.

On Coalition colonies or habitats, ordinances have been put in place that allow the use (but not fabrication) of weapons in hostile terrain.

In most cases, however, it is possible to apply for and purchase a weapons license in Coalition space. It certainly isn't an easy or cheap process, though, so most don't bother. The presence of the Protectorate provides safety.

In apostate space the rules may vary, though most don't regulate the use of anything but weapons of mass destruction.

Railguns/Coil Guns

Railguns and coil guns use the same basic technology, but differ in that technology's application. The basic concept is simple. The weapon generates a magnetic field that is used to propel a projectile at speeds dozens of times faster than the speed of sound. No chemical propellant is necessary, and the only sound emitted comes from the chambering mechanism and the sonic boom created when the projectile breaks the sound barrier.

However, railguns and coil guns feature selector switches that allows for subsonic "silenced" fire. Of course, as a side effect, subsonic rounds have greatly reduced range and penetration.

Coil guns accelerate a conductive projectile down a series of coils via a quickly changing magnetic field.

Railguns use two conductive rails to generate a current flow that accelerates a projectile to tremendously high velocities.

Coil and railguns use the same physics, but railguns usually have higher muzzle velocities (about 5,000 m/sec) and superior ranges to equivalently sized coil guns, but tend to have slower rates of fire.

Rail-arrays use railgun technology, but consist of a bundle of smaller-diameter barrels, all aimed a few degrees off-center. All of the barrels fire at once, blasting many small-caliber railgun rounds away from the shooter in a tight cone.

While they do not have the raw destructive power of comparable particle accelerator weapons, railguns and coil guns remain more popular due to their versatility.

Particle Acceleration Guns ("PAc Guns")

Power consumption has always been the bane of projected energy weapons technology, but with the Singularity, came tremendous advances in power storage technology.

Lasers where the first type of directed energy weapon to gain widespread usage in the military. But it wasn't long before lattice-carbonite based reflective armor came into being, greatly reducing the effectiveness of light-based weapons. But in the long-standing tradition of military escalation, the answer was just around the corner.

Particle accelerator weapons, often called "PAcs" (pronounced "Packs"), utilize electromagnetic fields to propel particles, accelerating them to near light speed, while confining them to a tight beam.

The primary disadvantage of PAc guns is their high power consumption and heat output. They have a limited number of shots per power cell if not within range of a broadcast power field, and overheat quickly when rapidly fired.

As the beam collides with air molecules, energy is bleeds off and redirects down the channel, using the "tunnel" burned through the air as a tunnel to hold the stream's coherent. Because of this, PAc weapons work best in atmosphere. In vacuum, the beam spreads and destabilizes. As a result, it becomes weaker and harder to aim.

The beam resembles a tightly focused lightning bolt while in atmosphere. While in a vacuum the beam is invisible.

PAcs impart tremendous heat to the target. In a vacuum or trace atmosphere, their range is reduced by ½ (round down) and suffers a -3 penalty on all attack rolls.

Man-portable particle beam weapons used outside of a broadcast power field require a small power cell. Most PAc guns get about ten shots per cell. Depending on the weapon, the cell is either integrated into the gun, making it heavier and more bulky, or worn on the user's hip.

Explosives

Military infantry during this time have their choice of several types of explosives:

Lethal grenades mainly come in two flavors, the most common of which is an evolution of the traditional fragmentation grenade.

A frag grenade looks like a small sphere of lattice-carbonite with dozens of holes in it, which are openings for channels containing saboted micro-warheads shaped like spikes. It has an arming switch on it, with a five second delay. When the time has elapsed, the explosive blast generated is contained by the sphere, propelling the spikes from within. The spikes fly out at speeds far above the speed of sound, and explode after striking a hardened target or after one-tenth of a second.

Another type of grenade is the hell ball. Hell balls are thermobaric grenades that release combustible gasses a split second before exploding, resulting in massive overpressure and extreme heat.

A commonly used less-than-lethal grenade is the gooper. This grenade blasts the area with super-sticky strands that entangle those caught in the spray.

When making attacks with grenades, you may use either your Athletics or Demolitions.

Melee Weapons

Because a great deal of fighting takes place in enclosed areas, such as starships, and in many cases around fragile equipment, modern military units regularly train to use melee weapons.

Blades crafted with modern technology feature a mono-edge (1D-Edge) design, which is capable of cutting through almost anything. This type of blade has a lattice-carbonite edge that measures roughly 1/50,000th the width of a human hair, which informs the name 1D: one-dimensional. While the edge of the blade does actually have thickness, for most purposes that thickness is negligible.

Personal Armor

Armor worn by military or paramilitary soldiers comes in three basic categories: Light, Heavy, and Powered.

Light Armor – This lightweight ballistic armor consists of a fabric mesh of woven carbon nanostructures, inspired by the molecular structure of spider silk.

As flexible as normal cloth, the material is highly resistant to slashes and abrasions, and sports a non-Newtonian fluid layer that can instantly become rigid in response to impacts from gravitic weapons or bullets. It also provides some protection against PAc weapons, being designed to spread out the discharge as much as possible.

Full tactical suits are chemically coated, contamination- proof coveralls.

Though technically complex, light armor does not limit movement or mobility.

This sort of light armor is the standard apparel for shipboard military, security guards, and most Centurions. It is also used by hunters who stalk dangerous game, and by many remnant forces.

Heavy Armor – Heavier armor is used by soldiers and security forces that are going to be deployed directly into conflict. It is essentially the same as a light armor suit, but is covered in articulated lattice-carbonite plates, which are themselves coated with a thin layer of a self-healing ceramic-graphene composite.

The arrangement of plates is designed for maximum protection with minimum bulk, though it can still be fairly cumbersome.

Powered Armor [Restricted] – Powered armor is similar to heavy armor in that it consists of articulated plates over a thinner and lighter inner layer.

However, powered armor is completely sealed and features a number of systems designed to aid its wearer in other ways.

Since it is sealed, the armor also protects against the dangers of vacuum and the crushing forces of deep water submersion. Its onboard air storage and filtering systems allow the wearer to operate without an external air supply for up to 8 hours.

The suit can interface with a PPC or integrated computer (if it has that Feature) and can function as an AR interface.

The onboard power supply will provide the suit with enough power to function for about two weeks outside of a broadcast power field.

Unlike regular armor, the seals and interconnecting components of powered armor make donning and removing it difficult. Heavy powered armor usually requires the prospective wearer to enter an armor bay, within which the armor is assembled around him.

Armor Features

Different types of armor can support different features. The table on page 199 lists the features that come standard with each type of armor, and the total number of additional features that can be added.

Several typical armor features are described later in this chapter (pg. 200).

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Without special licenses (see the Licensed Stunt on pg. 172) it is illegal to acquire, fabricate, or use weapons or powered armor in Coalition-controlled space. They may only be acquired on the black market. Finding a seller of the item you need on the black market is a Favor (pg. 144).

If you already know a dealer, you can purchase the item with a simple Assets test (pg. 141).

Other types of items may be restricted as well, and are noted later in this chapter.

The laws that restrict the ownership, transportation, acquisition, and creation of certain items are problematic for many crews, making it difficult for them to move their restricted gear in and out of Coalition space. Most major transport hubs and entrances to major public buildings feature checkpoints that are set up to scan for weapons. These checkpoints use sub-millimeter and X-Ray imaging systems, among others.

Because of these security measures, restricted gear either needs to be acquired on the other side of the checkpoint, or the crew will need some way to get it through.

ITEM STATISTICS

This section deals with defining pieces of equipment in game terms. Pieces of equipment not given stats in this chapter are either too insignificant to need stats, or have been left up to the GM to create them herself using the existing items as guidelines.

Most all items will have one or more of the following statistics:

Weapon Rating (WR)

A weapon's Weapon Rating (WR) is added to the amount of stress inflicted on a successful attack. If the attack misses, the Weapon Rating has no effect.

Armor Rating (AR)

A suit of armor's Armor Rating (AR) indicates the amount of stress it negates from a successful hit. For example, if you have an AR of 2 and you are hit for 3 points of physical stress, you would only check one stress box.

Explosive Rating (ExR)

Explosives allow you to make an attack against everyone in the target zone, and the explosive's Explosive Rating (ExR) is added as a bonus to the attack test.

Explosive weapons have an Area rating, which determines the number of zones affected.

Equipment Rating (ER)

The Equipment Rating (ER) for tools indicates the bonus gained on a Skill test when that tool is used in a relevant way.

Range Rating

A weapon's Range is the maximum number of zones away the target can be without the attacker suffering penalties. A Range of 0 means the weapon can only be used to attack enemies in the same zone.

For every additional zone beyond your weapon's Range the target is, your attack test suffers a cumulative -1 penalty up to a max number of zones equal to the weapon's Range x2.

Ranges marked with "TH" indicate that the item must be thrown.

Cost Rating

An item's Cost is an abstract measure of the average value and rarity of an item. Generally the Cost is about four times more expensive than an item of the next lowest Cost.

Note that GMs may decide to adjust the Cost of an item depending on where you are trying to get it, how much demand there is for the item, whether or not it's legal to own, how hard it is to purchase or transport, and so on.

In addition to these potential modifiers, each House grants its members discounts when purchasing items from markets in which their House is strong. See the entries for the Houses starting on page 85. The Cost of the discounted goods are reduced by -1. For example, the Cost of a CIST for a member of House Cipriani is reduced by -1, assuming they are able to buy from their House.

Items can be bought in bulk. By increasing the Cost of an item by 1, you can purchase four of that item instead of one. Similarly, by increasing the Cost by 2, you can get sixteen, and so on, multiplying by a factor of four each time.

See page 141 for more on purchasing items.

EQUIPMENT MODIFICATIONS

Accessories and modifications may be added or made into various weapons, armor, or other equipment. These provide the items with Aspects. For example, adding a scope to a rifle may add the *Scoped* Aspect.

Adding an Aspect to an item increases its Cost by +1 for every Aspect added, and you may not add more than 2 Aspects this way.

The GM may also allow you to add primarily negative Aspects, such as *Poorly Maintained*, to an item to decrease its Cost by -1.

Combining Items

In some cases it is possible to combine two items, such as when attaching a grenade launcher to the bottom of an assault rifle.

The total Cost of the combined item is equal to the Cost of the most valuable item in the combination, +1.

OTHER NOTES

Beam Weapon – These weapons fire a constant stream of focused energy. You may use beam weapon special attacks (pg. 133).

Full Auto – These weapons feature extremely high rates of fire. You may use full-auto weapon special attacks (pg. 136).

Gravitic – These powered melee weapons utilize magnetic fields to amplify and redirect the natural gravity imparted on the weapon, delivering it to the target when struck. Thus, the weapon's impact is dramatically increased with an extra helping of pure kinetic force.

Mono-Edged – These bladed melee weapons are created with an almost infinitely sharp edge. At the very tip of the edge, a single carbon nanotube runs the length of the blade.

Such weapons never need to be sharpened, but over time may need to have their leading edge (the nanotube "wire") replaced. Despite the advanced technology required to build them, mono-edged weapons do not require power to function.

Particle Accelerator (PAc) – PAc weapons do not work well in a vacuum. In an environment with no air, their Range is reduced by ½ (round down) and suffer a -3 penalty on all attack rolls. They also gain the *Limited Power* Aspect outside of a broadcast power field. This allows them deplete their power cell, which must be replaced. Treat this like running out of ammo (pg. 139).

ITEM ASPECTS

Aspects of items such as weapons or armor can be invoked or compelled just like normal Aspects. You have the Aspect just by wielding the weapon, wearing the armor, or holding the item. Item Aspects are ways to inject some realistic-feeling tactical detail into combat. For example, if you‘re using a dagger and you get into close combat with a halberd wielder, you might invoke their sword’s *Huge(P)* Aspect to get a bonus to attack or defend against them.

Aspects are listed in italics in tables to separate them from other notes.

Common weapon and armor Aspects are as follows, with some advice on how to use them:

Anti-Vehicular – These weapons are specifically designed to deal damage to vehicles and hardened equipment. This Aspect might be invoked to allow you to potentially damage a vehicle with your weapon. See page 239 for more on attacking vehicles.

Armor Penetrating – Rounds fired from these weapons move very quickly and fragment little, packing enough focused kinetic energy to penetrate the toughest armor. However, since these rounds tend to fragment less and usually pass cleanly through the body, they are often less damaging to soft targets than rounds that break up and/or get stuck on impact.

Bulky – This item is heavy, cumbersome, and unbalanced. It can often be compelled to hinder movement or balance, and is tiresome to carry or wear for long periods of time.

High Capacity – Weapons with this Aspect tend to hold a lot of ammo. You can invoke this Aspect when using full-auto Maneuvers to help avoid running out of ammo.

Huge(P) – These weapons are massive in size, very heavy, and next to impossible to hide. They deal tremendous damage, but do not work well in confined areas. You might invoke this Aspect for intimidation, or it may be compelled to indicate collateral damage when fighting in close quarters or striking at targets very close to you. This Aspect can also be compelled by others to give them an advantage in initiative or to force a penalty any time a weapon this large is used one-handed.

Large – These weapons are awkward and heavy. While they offer substantial damage potential, they are cumbersome. Typically, this Aspect is compelled by others to get an initiative advantage against you, or it can be compelled when you try to hide such weapons. This Aspect could also be compelled any time you use a weapon this big with one hand.

Long – These melee weapons are very long and allow you to attack enemies at a greater distance than most. The GM may allow you to invoke this Aspect to Declare that you can attack enemies in an adjacent zone or even to gain a bonus on initiative against an opponent who must get by your weapon to get to you.

On Fire! – See page 136 for information on burning targets and zones. If you have this Aspect placed on you, you are effectively exposed to an Intensity 6 Fire and will continue to take damage until it is removed.

Shotgun(P) – Weapons with this Aspect fire a blast of projectiles in a cone-shaped pattern. This Aspect may be invoked at close range for a more damaging attack, or compelled at a range of a few zones for a lessened effect.

Slow Firing – These weapons take a little while to charge, or take a few seconds to acquire a target. This Aspect can be compelled on a turn after the weapon has been fired to declare that the weapon is not yet ready to be fired again.

Small – These weapons are small enough to be hidden on the body, and work well in close quarters combat. You might invoke this Aspect for a bonus on initiative rolls or attempts to hide the weapon. However, their small size and light weight mean they don’t fare well when defending against larger weapons.

Size-Related Aspects

Many weapons have Aspects that relate to their size, weight, or length, such as *Small*, *Large*, or *Huge(P)*. These Aspects can be invoked or compelled for a bonus on an attack test, but this should only be allowed in certain situations. Generally, GMs should not permit invoking a *Large* or *Huge(P)* weapon's Aspect for an attack just because the weapon is big. Likewise, a small weapon's Aspect should not be compelled just because it is small; that's already factored into the weapon's WR.

These sorts of Aspects should be invoked or compelled for a bonus or penalty on an attack only if they offer some distinct advantage or disadvantage based on the current situation. For example, small weapons are effective in a grapple or very close combat, while larger weapons are harder to use in confined spaces. For a stand-up fight in an open area, size-related Aspects are not likely to come into play on a standard attack test.

AMMUNITION

When you purchase a ranged weapon, you get one unit of ammunition for free. The amount of ammo in a unit is intentionally vague since FATE isn't about tracking every bullet or beam fired.

However, should you ever run out of ammo (pg. 139), your current unit is spent and you'll need to reload with a new one.

Additional units of ammo have a Cost of 1. A Cost of 2 will get you four units of ammo for any of your weapons, and a Cost of 3 will get you 16. Special ammunition (pg. 197) may cost more.

If you purchase three extra units of ammo, the extra ammo is recorded on the character sheet as "Extra Ammo x3." If you run out and have to reload, it becomes "Extra Ammo x2."

Ammo, like weapons, is restricted.

Special Ammunition

The stats listed for each weapon assumes the weapon is using the standard ammunition for its type. However, special ammunition can be used in some weapons.

Each type of special ammo comes with an Aspect. Any time that Aspect is invoked or compelled, immediately perform a Firearms test to see if you have run out of ammo (pg. 139).

If you run out of ammo while using a unit of special ammunition, you'll need to reload. You may either reload with another unit of special ammo or with regular ammo.

The Cost of a single unit of each type of ammo is listed below. Increase the listed Cost by +1 to get four units of that type of ammo, +2 to get sixteen units, and so on.

Shredder Ammo ("Rippers")

Cost for Single Ammo Unit: 2

These rounds shatter or explode on impact, propelling shrapnel into the target. This type of ammo tends to be easily stopped by armor, but is devastating to unarmored targets.

This ammo has the *Shredder* Aspect.

Penetrator Ammo ("Diggers")

Cost for Single Ammo Unit: 2

The tips of these rounds consist of a hardened material that resists shattering upon contact with the target.

The loaded weapon gains the *Armor Penetrating* Aspect. If the weapon already has that Aspect, it becomes Persistent.

Guided Ammo ("Blood-Hounds")

Cost for Single Ammo Unit: 3

Before a weapon is capable of firing guided ammo, it must be outfitted with a guidance system. Guided ammo is able to make slight course corrections in mid-flight, effectively homing in on the pre-selected target.

This ammo has the *Guided* Aspect.

The Cost of a weapon with a blood-hound guidance system is increased by +1. However, if you have the Targeting Support System Augmentation, you do not need a guidance system integrated into the weapon.

FIREARMS

Pistols	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Light Rail-Pistol	+3	2	3	*Armor Penetrating, Small,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Rail-Pistol	+4	2	4	*Armor Penetrating, Small,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Light PAc Pistol	+4	4	5	Particle Accelerator, *Small*
Heavy PAc Pistol	+5	4	6	Particle Accelerator, *Small*

Personal Defense Weapons (PDW)	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Light Coil PDW	+3	3	4	Full Auto*,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Coil PDW	+4	3	5	Full Auto*,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Light PAc PDW	+4	5	6	Beam Weapon, Particle Accelerator
Heavy PAc PDW	+5	5	7	Beam Weapon, Particle Accelerator

Assault Rifles	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Coil Carbine	+4	4	6	Full Auto, *Large,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Coil Assault Rifle	+5	4	7	Full Auto, *Huge(P) ,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Rail-Carbine	+5	4	6	*Armor Penetrating, Large,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Assault Rail-Rifle	+6	4	7	*Armor Penetrating, Huge(P) ,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
PAc Carbine	+6	6	8	Beam Weapon, Particle Accelerator, *Large*
Heavy PAc Assault Rifle	+7	6	9	Beam Weapon, Particle Accelerator, *Huge(P)*

Rail-Arrays	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Light Rail-Array	+5	2	6	*Armor Penetrating, Large, Shotgun(P) ,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Rail-Array	+6	2	7	*Armor Penetrating, Large, Shotgun(P) ,* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*

Rifles	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Light Sniper Rail-Rifle	+6	7	6	*Anti-Vehicular, Armor Penetrating, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P),* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Heavy Sniper Rail-Rifle	+7	7	7	*Anti-Vehicular, Armor Penetrating, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P),* Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*
Light PAc Sniper Rifle	+8	9	8	Particle Accelerator, *Anti-Vehicular, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P)*
Heavy PAc Sniper Rifle	+9	9	9	Particle Accelerator, *Anti-Vehicular, Day/Night Scope, Huge(P)*

Heavy Weapons	WR/ExR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Heavy Coil Automatic Rifle	+6	4	8	Full Auto, *Armor Penetrating, High Capacity, Huge(P)*
Portable Rail-Minigun	+7	3	10	Full Auto, *Armor Penetrating, High Capacity(P), Huge(P)*
Heavy PAc Cannon	+9	7	12	Beam Weapon, Particle Accelerator, Requires 1 round to cool between shots, *Anti-Vehicular, Huge(P),*
Light Plasma Flamer	+5	2	6	Targets who suffer stress, and the zone attacked, are *On Fire* and are subjected to an Intensity 6 Environmental Hazard, *Huge(P)*
Heavy Plasma Flamer	+6	2	7	Targets who suffer stress, and the zone attacked, are *On Fire* and are subjected to an Intensity 6 Environmental Hazard, *Huge(P)*
Grenade Launcher	Varies	3	6	See grenades in “Explosives” table below for damage.
Rocket Launcher (RPG)	+9	4 ExR	10	Explosive, *Anti-Vehicular, Huge(P), Slow Firing(P)*
Kinetic Strike Rail-Cannon	+10	5 ExR	11	Explosive, *Anti-Vehicular, Huge(P), Slow Firing(P)*

Note that all firearms are **Restricted** in Coalition space.

MELEE WEAPONS

Blades	WR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Knife / Dagger	+1	1 TH	0	*Small*
Machete	+2	0	1	
Dagger, Mono-Edged	+2	1 TH	2	*Small*
Short Sword, Mono-Edged	+3	0	3	
Longsword, Mono-Edged	+4	0	4	*Large*
Spear, Mono-Edged	+4	1 TH	5	*Large*
Halberd, Mono-Edged	+5	0	6	*Long, Huge(P)*

Blunt Weapons	WR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Punch/Kick	+0	0	0	*Unarmed*
Small Club/Baton	+1	0	0	*Small*
Tonfa (Police Nightstick)	+1	0	0	*Quick*
Hammer	+1	0	0	
Club/Baseball Bat	+2	0	0	*Large*
Large Club	+2	0	0	*Huge(P)*
Gravitic Baton	+3	0	3	

Axes	WR	Range	Cost	Notes and Aspects
Hatchet	+1	1 TH	0	*Small*
Battle Axe, Mono-Edged	+4	0	4	*Large*

ARMOR

Unpowered Armor	AR	Cost	Built in Features	Additional Features
Flight Suit	+0	2	Thermal Regulation System	0
Reinforced Clothing or Protective	+1	3	None	0
Vacuum Suit	+1	4	Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, *Bulky*	0
Reinforced Vacuum Suit	+2	5	Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, *Bulky*	1
Light Battle Armor [Restricted]	+3	4	None	1
Heavy Battle Armor [Restricted]	+4	5	None	1

Powered Armor [Restricted]	AR	Cost	Built in Features	Additional Features
Powered Recon Armor	+4	7	Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System	1
Powered Light Assault Armor	+5	9	Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, Reinforced Cyber-	2
Powered Heavy Assault Armor	+6	11	Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, Reinforced Cyber-	3

EXPLOSIVES

Explosives [Restricted]	ExR	Area	Cost	Notes
Fragmentation Grenade	+6	1	4	
Incendiary Grenade	+6	1	5	Targets that suffer stress, and the zone attacked, are *On Fire*.
Stun Grenade	+1	1	2	Targets that suffer stress in the zone attacked are *Stunned*.
Gooper Grenade	+4	1	4	Deals no stress. Armor has no effect. Creates a Block on movement equal to your attack Effort.
Hell Ball	+8	1	5	*Tremendous Heat and Shockwave*
Smoke Grenade	None	1	2	Not Restricted. Gives zone attacked the *Smokey* Aspect for the duration of the scene, or until cleared.
High Explosive Satchel	+10	3	8	Attack test uses Demolitions.

ARMOR FEATURES

Armor you purchase may support a number of additional Features, which you may select from the list below. These Features are free with the armor, but each type of armor can only support a certain number of Features. You may not add a Feature more than once to the same suit of armor.

Feature	Effect
Air Pack	Pumps up to 8 hours' worth of breathable air into a sealed helmet.
Computer Gauntlet	A PPC (Alpha Agent) mounted to the arm and operated with voice commands and/or a holographic interface projected from the hand. You may also choose to display data on your HUD.
Enhanced Mobility Actuators*	Grants a +2 bonus on all Athletics tests related to movement, such as Hustling, climbing, etc.
High-Density Plating	Add +1 to the Armor Rating provided by the armor.
Hydrostatic Gel Layer*	The wearer gains a +3 bonus to his AR when defending against explosions. The armor's AR absorbs stress from falling.
Integrated Weaponry*	Armor features an arm- or shoulder-mounted weapon built into the system. Select any one weapon from the following: a pistol with accessories, a PDW with accessories, a dagger, or a short sword. You must purchase this weapon separately, but its Cost is reduced by -1.
Interface Surface	Some surface on the armor, usually the hand, can transmit digital data to and from an onboard computer via a touch interface system.
Jump Jets	You can jump large distances, up to a height of about 50 feet. When Hustling, you can move one extra zone. When Running, you can move two extra zones. You gain a +3 bonus during chases.
Light Screen Camouflage*	When activated, the surface of the armor emits a magnetic field that wraps light around the wearer, making him nearly invisible. The wearer is granted the *Chameleon* Aspect.
Mag-Traction	Boots come equipped with electromagnets. These are used to traverse zero-g environments safely.
Motion Tracker	Your suit has sensors that detect motion up to about 20 meters. You gain the *Motion Tracker* Aspect.
Reinforced Cyber-Musculature*	You gain a +2 bonus on all Athletics tests to lift, push, pull, jump, climb, or otherwise manipulate objects or grapple with opponents. In addition, when making a melee attack, or when you attack by throwing a weapon or object, the WR for that attack is increased by +2.
Thermal Regulation System	Keeps the wearer at a comfortable temperature in environments ranging from -60°C to 140°C.
Vacuum Sealed and Shielded	Provides the wearer with protection from the hazards of vacuum and radiation.
Zero-G Assistance Jets	A series of tiny thrusters on the limbs and torso aids in maneuvering in zero-g environments, granting the wearer a *Zero-G Maneuverability* Aspect.

* Power Armor Only

MISC. EQUIPMENT

Aerial Condenser: (Cost: 2) Popular among explorers and outdoorsmen, this small device is capable of removing moisture from the nearby air and condensing it into drinkable water. In most locations it can create a gallon of water in about three hours.

Ballistic Cartographer: (Cost: 4) This device attaches to the end of a rifle, but may also be detached and fired.

When fired, the ballistic cartographer launches a projectile that can stick to any hard surface. Once stuck, it sprays small sensors in all directions, which also can stick to most any surface.

These sensors scan the environment and feed the data they collect back to a computer system of the user's choice. This data is used to create a 3D map of the environment, updated in real time.

The ballistic cartographer can be fired into the air, programmed to detonate before landing. This method creates a top-down map of an outdoor area.

Agent: (Cost: 4/7/10) An Agent is a personal virtual intelligence commonly found onboard PPCs and mindsets. The Agent responds to voice commands (or thoughts in the case of a mindset) and performs the requested computing tasks. It may find, sort, modify, and even create data at the user's behest. An Agent is capable of learning about its master, logging habits, desires, and actions in an attempt to better serve.

The Cost of an Agent depends on how useful it is, which is represented by the sorts of bonuses it can apply to certain Skill rolls. It also determines the Cost of the PPC it is loaded onto, which is the Cost of the Agent +1.

Any time you need to perform a test the Agent can help you with, you may add the Agent's bonus as a modifier.

Agents can add a bonus any time you need to perform a test with a Skill the Agent has enhancement software for. Agents can be outfitted with enhancement software for the following Skills: Diplomacy, Education, Engineering (either), Insight, Mnemonics, Research, or Strategy.

Should an Agent be called upon to perform a Skill test on its own, assume it has a rank of 1 in any relevant Skills, and can apply its enhancement software bonuses to itself.

Type	Cost	Enhancement Bonuses
Alpha	4	+1 to one Skill
Beta	7	+1 to two Skills
Gamma	10	+2 to one Skill, +1 to two Skills

Augmented Reality (AR) Display Device: (Cost: 2) These glasses look like any other set of head-worn spectacles, save for the occasional flash of light across their surface noticeable by the casual observer. To the wearer, however, they are a gateway to a wealth of information. AR display devices allow the wearer to see AR objects and data.

This same technology can also be found in contact lenses, at a Cost of 3.

Augmented Reality Identification (ARID) Tag: (Cost: 0) An ARID is the digital equivalent of a fingerprint.

Depending on how protected they are, ARIDs range in size from that of a small coin up to about the size of one's thumb. They are programmed with (typically) read-only data that is displayed and accessible in augmented reality.

ARIDs are attached to most retail items, people, information booths, or anything else used to relate information.

Usually an ARID carried by a person will be worn as jewelry or as a subdermal implant.

In Coalition space, children are implanted with an ARID at birth, called a CID, which retains their personal profile. When viewed through an AR display device, the part of this profile set to be publicly visible is displayed as an ARO near the person.

These sorts of ARIDs are implanted in all sleeves, and are flashed with one's personal profile data. It is illegal to remove or tamper with a CID.

Gear	Cost
Aerial Condenser	2
Ballistic Cartographer	4
Agent	4/7/10
AR Display Device	2
AR Identification (ARID) Tag	0
ARID Cloner [R]	4
Box Tent	2
Broadcast Screen	4
Compiler	6+
Compiler Template	Varies
Credit Disk	0
Cyber-Intrusion & Sec Term (CIST) [R]	10
Cyber-Repair Injection (CRI)	3
Esper Swarm	7
False CID [R]	5-11
Fiberscope	2
4D Spatial Camera	3
Holomask [R]	6
Hostware	7
Medi-Stimulant Injection (MSI)	3
Molecular Glue & Solvent	1
Neural Link	3
Plasti-Rope Dispenser	1
Portable Personal Computer (PPC)	5/8/11
Portable Plasma Torch	3
Portable Broadcast Power Generator	6
Ration Lozenge	1
Resurrection Chamber [R]	12
Resurrection Insurance	3-11
Simulated Augmentation	Special
Simulated Memory (Sensie)	2+
Spider Gear Kit	2
Targeting Support Module [R]	4
Tele-presence Sensor Unit	3
Transportation	Varies
VR Interface (Ego Channel)	3

ARID Cloner: (Restricted, Cost: 4) This small hand-held device can copy and implant information stored in an ARID.

Box Tent: (Cost: 2) When not in active use, the box tent is about as big as a few books stacked together, and weighs about half that. When activated, it transforms in about five seconds into a rigid tent capable of comfortably sleeping two. Once activated, it uses solar power to cool or heat the inside of the tent as needed.

Broadcast Screen: (Cost: 4) Activating this device creates a shell of intense EM interference, roughly 2 meters around you in all directions, blocking or dampening incoming and outgoing wireless electronic transmissions. This device is usually worn on the wrist, as a belt buckle, or sometimes as a piece of jewelry.

This is a popular item among people who dislike being bombarded with information from advertisers and the like.

Attempts to manipulate a computer through a broadcast screen suffer a -4 penalty.

Compiler: (Cost: 6+) Compilers use nanomachines to assemble objects at the atomic level. As long as you have the proper template and the necessary raw materials, you can create almost anything. See page 58 for more on compilers.

These devices range in size from about a half cubic meter to the size of a large room, and their Cost is tied directly to their size. Smaller compilers are common in Coalition homes and have a Cost of 6. Much larger versions are used in production facilities and have Cost ratings as high as 12.

Compilers come with a number of limitations. They will only run for Coalition citizens, and will only run unrestricted templates. Producing weapons or other restricted items is impossible unless you have a license to do so.

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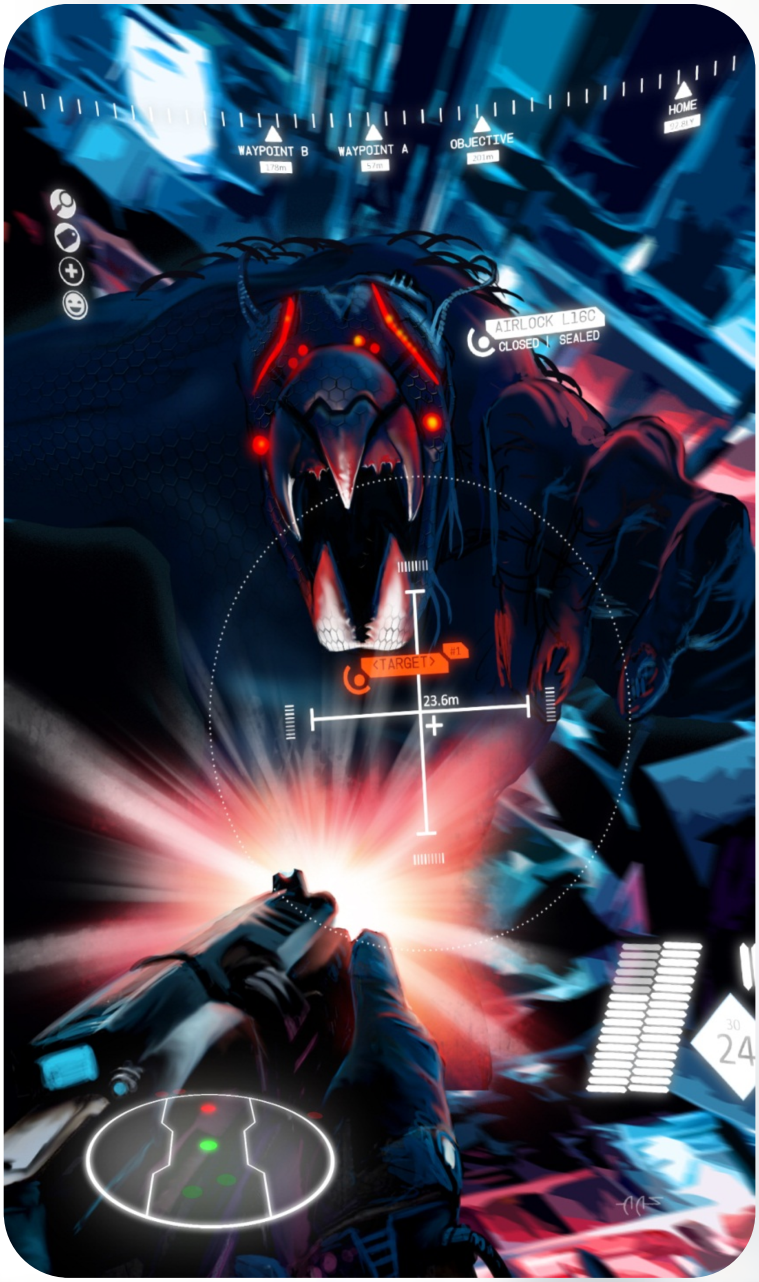
Compilers also have the necessary sensors to know where they are located, and they will not work outside of Coalition-controlled space.

Some compilers have had these limitations removed, but they are essentially priceless. Apostate forces will do almost anything to get their hands on one of these, and the Coalition will not hesitate to kill to make sure that doesn't happen.

Compiler Template: (Cost: Cost of Item +2) A compiler template is a piece of software that functions as the instructions for a compiler to build a specific object.

The Cost of a template is equal to the Cost of the item it produces +2.

If you purchase a template during character creation, you can begin play with up to 3 copies of the item the template compiles for free.



Credit Disk ("Credisk"): (Cost: 0) These small electronic devices, usually about the size of a coin, are designed to hold the necessary data required to perform a one-time monetary transaction. These are often used by apostate enclaves or in black market deals when actual gold currency isn't convenient, allowing you to use credisks to facilitate the transfer of funds through one of the few remaining underground banks.

Programming a credit disk is usually performed with a PPC. The amount of credit it is set to transfer with the credisk is visible on a small screen on both sides of the credisk "coin." Once the transaction is complete, the credit disk can be reprogrammed for a different transaction.

Cyber-Intrusion and Security Terminal (CIST): (Restricted, Cost: 10) CISTs are computers purpose-built for housing an Agent capable of running cyber-intrusion software.

Some people call these Savant Boxes or Daemon Boxes, but these terms are inaccurate. A true Daemon comes about as a result of a Savant hacking his mindset to free his Agent. The

Savant writes SINC, and is capable of modifying it and writing new Savant Programs.

CISTs, on the other hand, are created for the Coalition military for the sole purpose of breaking into protected systems. Each CIST is capable of running only a single intrusion routine, and generally takes the shape of a PPC. They are highly restricted, and very difficult to come by.

In game terms, a CIST allows a non-Savant character to use a Savant Program. Each CIST is only capable of running one such Program.

Executing and utilizing the Program works the same way it does for a Savant, but with a few exceptions.

Whenever the user is called upon to use the SINC Skill, he used Software Engineering instead.

The same CIST cannot be used more than once per scene.

CISTs do not suffer system stress on a failed execution test. Instead, the Program executes and then simply ceases to function for an amount of time (pg. 149) equal to the amount by which the user failed his execution test +2.

If the user Stalls on the execution test, the Program fails to execute and, as above, ceases to function depending on the difference between the user's Effort and the execution test difficulty.

For example, if the CIST Program has an execution difficulty of 4, and the user generates 2 Effort on his Software Engineering test, the Program would execute. However, it will not be usable again for a whole day.

It is possible to make the CIST usable again more quickly. The user must spend about 5 minutes working on the CIST, succeed on a Software Engineering test (Diff: 3), and spend a Fate Point.

Alternatively, some CISTs exist purely to defend against other CISTs and Savants. Instead of executing a single Savant Program, the CIST simply adds +3 to the execution difficulty of any attempt to execute a Savant Program, either by a Savant or another CIST, against the CIST's user or a single computer system of his choice.

Cyber-Repair Injection (CRI): (Cost: 3) This is a protected syringe filled with a mixture of carbon paste and a small swarm of espers designed much like a tiny Vulcan swarm. The espers use the raw materials in the paste to patch holes and perform other repairs to damaged cybernetics.

Use of a CRI allows you to recover a Mild Physical Consequence in about a minute, downgrade a Moderate to a Mild in about an hour, or downgrade a Severe(P) Consequence to a Moderate Consequence in about a day.

Extreme(P) Consequences cannot be affected by the CRI.

This repair only applies to cybersleeves, biosleeves that have undergone Synthesis, or any Consequences that reflect damage to cybernetic components.

Esper Swarm: (Cost: 7) An esper swarm is a swarm of nanomachines typically controlled by either a "Queen" server or a Savant with the Esper Lord Savant Program (pg. 180).

Made up of millions of tiny nanites, these machines work together as a swarm to perform any number of useful activities, from security, to repairs, to sanitation.

A swarm is programmed to perform a single job at a time unless it is controlled by a Savant.

A server system featuring the software necessary to function as a Queen has a Cost of 10.

False CID: (Restricted, Cost: 5-11) You have a CID that is a complete fabrication. It has a Rep-Rating that is not your own, and displays a false profile when viewed by others.

Even the best false CIDs can't stand up to too much scrutiny, though. The fake CID comes with a fabricated virtual history, but anyone who spends a lot of time checking out your involvement in social networks will eventually grow suspicious.

The Cost of a false CID depends on how hard it is to detect as a fake, and how high the ID's Rep-Rating is.

Any time this fake Rep-Rating is bumped or hit, there is a chance it could be discovered as a fake. There is also a chance of discovery when trying to acquire an item through its Rep-Rating. Since the Rep is not real, it's not possible to use it to call in Favors.

To determine whether or not the ID has been detected as fake, perform a test (Diff: 2), adding only the false CID's ER as a modifier. If it fails this test, it is detected as fake by the person or agency that just attempted to hit or bump it.

Cost	ER Rating	Rep-Rating
5	+1	4
7	+2	5
9	+3	6
11	+4	7

Switching between CIDs, either real or false, requires an ARID cloner. The cloner can be used through the skin; no surgery is needed.

A Savant can switch between CIDs at will using his mindset.

Fiberscope: (Cost: 2) This is a small fiber-optic cable attached to a small monitor. It can be snaked under doors, through vents, or around similar obstacles. Attached to the end of the cable is a high-resolution camera capable of seeing in multiple EM spectrums, with a directional audio amplification system.

4D Spatial Camera: (Cost: 3) Utilizing over a dozen forms of imaging and radiation-bouncing techniques, this camera can create fully three-dimensional representations of an area, with audio, in still frame or full motion video. These captured spatial maps are often displayed in augmented and virtual reality.

HoloMask: (Restricted, Cost: 6) This device, usually worn as a sort of necklace or headband, projects a hologram over your face. This hologram masks your features, making you appear to be someone else.

The mask can replicate the appearance of anyone you have mapped with a spatial camera.

The hologram is good enough to fool a mesh Monitor, making it impossible for the Monitor to identify you with facial recognition protocols.

If a test is required, the holomask grants a +2 bonus on Guile rolls to remain disguised.

Hostware: (Cost: 7) While there is no need to track every piece of software a computer system may have on it, whether or not a computer is outfitted with a hostware suite can be critical.

Hostware is the software needed to host an ego in an active state. Any computer has the storage capacity to house dozens of egos if they are dormant, but only systems with a hostware suite can both store the ego and provide it with an environment to live in.

Because of the expense, most computer systems do not feature hostware.

Medi-Stimulant Injection (MSI): (Cost: 3) This is a protected syringe that houses a cocktail of nanites, painkillers, and various chemicals specifically designed to regenerate tissue while keeping the mind focused.

Using an MSI allows you to recover a Mild Physical Consequence in about five minutes, downgrade a Moderate in about an hour, or downgrade a Severe(P) Consequence to a Moderate Consequence in about a day.

Note that MSIs do not work on cybernetic components or cybersleeves.

Molecular Glue & Solvent: (Cost: 1) This hardened bottle dispenses a small amount of glue. The glue bonds to anything and is nearly impossible to remove without a solvent. M-Glue is often used in place of welding or soldering. Each pack contains both a bottle of glue and solvent.

Neural Link ("Link"): (Cost: 3) Worn neural mapping systems that can translate thoughts into computer input. These devices are usually called neural links, or just links, and often take the form of a small device clipped over the ear, a hat, or a headdress. Like a mindset, a link allows the user to mentally issue commands to a computer. This technology makes other types of interfacing devices, real or ARO, largely unnecessary.

Plasti-Rope Dispenser: (Cost: 1) Not much larger than a closed fist, this device can dispense about 100 meters of rope. The material leaves the dispenser as a liquid, but hardens almost instantly into a flexible rope capable of supporting about four tons of static weight.

Portable Personal Computer (PPC): (Cost: Cost of Agent +1) PPCs range in size from wrist-worn systems to tablets. They are interacted with by voice commands or through augmented reality display and interface devices.

PPCs always come equipped with an Agent and dozens of other software programs that people use every day to learn, communicate, create, and entertain themselves.

Portable Plasma Torch: (Cost: 3) This small hand-held device burns hot enough, and with enough focus, to cut through most any material.

It can cut a 10 millimeter-long slice, 10 millimeters deep, in lattice-carbonite in about a minute.

If used as a weapon, its tiny flame has a WR of 1.

Portable Broadcast Power Generator: (Cost: 6) These generators are essentially compact reactors, usually ranging from about the size of a briefcase to that of a large building. The Cost listed is for a smaller model, which can broadcast out to a range of about 100 meters.

Objects designed to run on broadcast power never need batteries or power cables while in a sustained field. Most such devices do have internal power cells that can keep them running for a short time (usually about a day to a week depending on the device) in the event that the field goes down.

Ration Lozenge: (Cost: 1) This small lozenge, about the size of a large bean, contains all the vitamins and nutrients a person needs for half a day. By itself it is not very filling, but with a glass of water the lozenge expands, and a moment later the imbiber will feel quite satisfied. These are very popular among survivalists.

Resurrection Chamber: (Restricted, Cost: 12) The resurrection chamber is the casket-like device used to download an ego into a sleeve. The chamber itself, suspension gel tanks, nanomachines, and other gear required for resurrection take up most of a small room, and are incredibly expensive.

They are also restricted, requiring special licenses to acquire and operate.

See page 146 for more on resleeving.

Resurrection Insurance: (Cost: 3-11) Characters who have undergone Apotheosis usually decide to set up some sort of insurance policy.

Each policy has a minimum Rep-Rating required for purchase, and has a one-time fee you must pay.

Note that if your Rep-Rating ever falls below the minimum for your policy, you will be automatically downgraded with no reimbursement of the initial fee.

Policy	Min. Rep.	Fee Cost
Alpha	3	4
Beta	5	6
Gamma	7	8
Delta	9	11
Epsilon	11	14

All policies grant a single backup at the time of purchase, and additional backups can be made once per week. This requires payment of the Fee Cost each time.

The different policies are described below:

Alpha: If your core is delivered to a resleeving facility belonging to your House, you will be brought online in a virtuality to discuss resleeving options.

Note that if your mnemonic core has a Remote Backup upgrade (pg. 214), it will immediately alert the House of your demise and send your location.

Beta: Once your death has been confirmed, or you have been missing for at least three months, the House will send a crew to recover your core if they know its last known location.

If they do not know where it is, you will be restored from backup.

Gamma: The House will send a recovery team to investigate your location if you have gone missing for one week.

If your core has been lost in a hostile environment, a crew of mercenaries will be dispatched to reclaim it.

Delta: Like Gamma, but the recovery team dispatched will be composed of professionals and/or a Praetorian.

Epsilon: The House will spare no expense in an effort to recover your core. It will dispatch full military units, or multiple Praetorians.

Simulated Augmentation: (Cost: Special) When entering a virtuality, the brain is scanned to create your avatar and determine its capabilities.

This is why you generally possess the same physical Skills both in the real world and in VR.

The system also takes note of your Augmentations; they too are represented in virtual form, assuming the virtual environment you are being loaded into allows them.

SIMs, however, do not have physical forms. But they can still purchase virtual Augmentations that work just like real Augmentations inside of VR.

To purchase a virtual aug, buy it like you would any other augmentation (pg. 211) with the total Cost reduced by -1. Non-SIMs can purchase the virtual-only version of an aug as well, but it still counts against the total number of augs you have.

SIMs have Apotheosis as a simulated Augmentation for free.

Note that the limitations on aug use imposed by the HPA do not apply to virtualities. Different environments, however, may limit or modify certain augs in order to reinforce their themes.

Simulated Memory (“Sensie”): (Cost: 2+) These are the recorded memories of another person, captured by a mindset or an ego channel, and downloaded onto a memory module. Many people—even celebrities—give away sensies for free, although some can be very expensive depending on what they depict. Sensies of recorded sex, crimes, and even suicide are very popular underground items.

Spider Gear Kit: (Cost: 2) These gloves, boots, and kneepads can adhere to almost any solid surface, allowing the wearer to climb sheer walls or even hang suspended upside down. Their adhesiveness is triggered by an electronic signal, which allows the adhesive to be switched on and off.

Targeting Support Module: (Restricted, Cost: 4) This device is installed onto a firearm, and syncs with a Targeting Support System (pg. 225).

Tele-presence Sensor Unit: (Cost: 3) This device appears to be a small ball, about the size of an adult fist. It contains a number of audio and video sensors, much like an ARIS strip, but offers full 360 degree coverage.

The sensor unit is generally used by SIMs to view the real world. The SIM can hear and see anything the sensor unit can. If desired, the unit can also project an ARO or hologram of the SIM above itself.

This function allows the SIM to attend meetings in the real world without requiring everyone else to jack into a virtuality or having to grant everyone access to their AR stream.

Transportation: (Cost: See Below) There are a lot of options for getting from point A to B.

The first and most obvious is to purchase a vehicle (pg. 233), but most Coalition cities and habitats offer several public transportation options.

Private Skiff or Lancer: (Cost: 2) You can request a skiff via the Extranet to pick you up. It usually takes just a few minutes for a skiff to arrive, and you can either pilot it yourself (with the aid of an AI “co-pilot”), or let the AI do all the work.

Most skiffs are one of three or four common models, but by increasing the Cost to 3, you can specify a premium model built for luxury and speed.

Lancer rental works the same way and has the same Cost.

Once rented, the skiff is yours for an hour. Increase the Cost by 1 if you wish to keep it for 8 hours.

Interplanetary: (Cost: Varies) Travel between planets usually requires a ship, either a privately or publicly owned.

Most major Coalition cities have spaceports, where atmospheric flight-capable spacecraft are docked. Many of these craft travel back and forth between the more densely populated cities. The Cost for a one-way trip is 4, +1 for every planet or isolated habitat along the way.

Intersystem: (Cost: Varies) Travel from one system to another is much like interplanetary travel, but requires the use of a jump-capable ship or the jump ring network.

In either case, the Cost is the same as an interplanetary trip, +3.

Needle Beaming an Ego (Cost: 6) This is the fastest mode of travel for those who have undergone Apotheosis, but it is both costly and dangerous.

Your ego is uploaded to a comm-buoy via needle-beam, and then downloaded at the desired location. This process allows you to travel to another system in just a few hours. This method of travel is rarely used, however, since resleeving is so traumatic.

VR (Virtuality) Interface (“Ego Channel”): (Cost: 3) A VRI is usually a small computer, often a specialized PPC, capable of running a virtuality interface program. With a VRI, the user can cast his consciousness into the computer’s virtual environment and interact with it as if it were a real place.

The ego channel usually consists of a series of sensors set into a net-like cap that the user wears on her head. These sensors transfer data between the user’s mind and computer system.

This setup allows those who haven’t undergone Apotheosis to enter a virtuality.

SLEEVES

This section describes the different types of base sleeves available to characters, and samples of off-the-shelf sleeves available from different manufacturers.

Base Cost: This is the Cost of the sleeve. Once purchased, you gain all of the listed Aspects, Skills, and Augmentations.

Sleeve Aspects: All Sleeves come with at least one Aspect. These Aspects are in addition to other Aspects you may have and behave exactly like any other Aspects.

Physical Skills: Sleeves grant a number of ranks to place in their Physical Skills, arranged however you choose. However, no Skill single rating can exceed 5.

Augmentations: All sleeves undergo Apotheosis during one of the last phases of their production. They also have a number of Augmentation Points (APs), which can be spend to customize the sleeve with additional Augmentations.

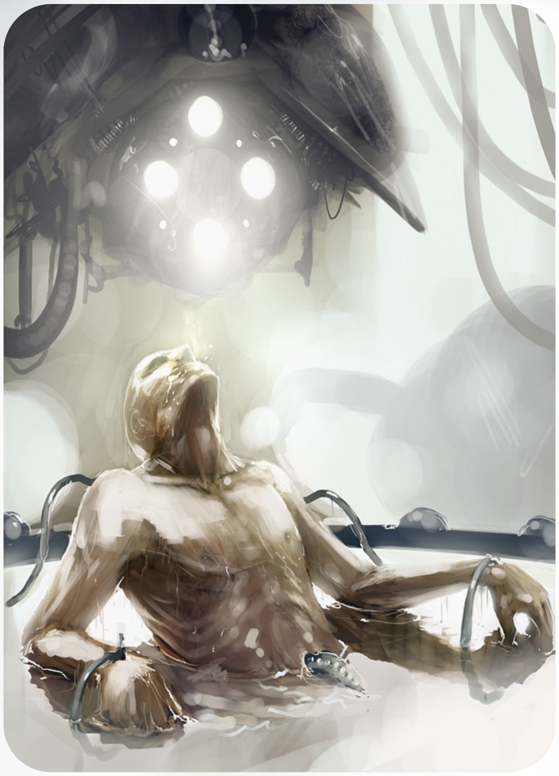
When you purchase a sleeve, you are given a number of APs to customize it with. Each time you add an aug, subtract its Augmentation Value (AV) from the sleeve's APs. Some augs may be upgraded, which may cost additional APs.

When you run out of APs, any additional augs you wish to add must be acquired as aftermarket purchases (pg. 211).

A sleeve, or Pure human body, can support a total number of Augmentations equal to its Endurance Skill x2.

Biosleeve

This basic biosleeve has been gene-fixed for improved health and resistance to diseases and toxins; it has also been Apotheosized. All sleeves of the same model are clones that stem from a master genetic template, but each biosleeve looks different due to randomizers in the cloning processes. However, despite the randomization, biosleeves of the same model still tend to share some similarities.



The most basic models, the cheapest, are the least attractive. For those willing to pay more, more attractive models are available.

Cybersleeve

The basic cybersleeve is a mass-produced humanoid robot, already outfitted with a mindset and prepared for decanting.

The inhuman appearance of the cybersleeve can sometimes adversely affect social interaction with biological beings. Living in a cybersleeve can be a real problem around Purists, and even deadly around Purifiers.

The underlying frame is a non-ferrous metal skeleton driven by synthetic muscles. Its composition and shielding mean it is no more susceptible to magnetic fields than a biological being.

Despite its capabilities, the sleeve's synthetic biology does not feel alive. This can wear on an ego's humanity over time.

Sleeve Customization

You can elect to increase the Cost of your sleeve by +1 in exchange for one of the following options:

- Trade up to 3 Physical Skill Ranks, on a 1 for 1 basis, for a maximum of 3 Augmentation Points or vice-versa.
- Make the sleeve a clone of your original body or current sleeve. It takes about two weeks to flash-clone a sleeve.

Alpha Biosleeve

Base Cost: 6 **Augmentation Points:** 2
Sleeve Aspect: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Unattractive*
Physical Skills: 8 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis

Beta Biosleeve

Base Cost: 7 **Augmentation Points:** 3
Sleeve Aspect: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*
Physical Skills: 9 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis

Gamma Biosleeve

Base Cost: 9 **Augmentation Points:** 4
Sleeve Aspect: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*
Physical Skills: 10 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis and your choice of Cosmetic Customization or Striking Looks

Delta Biosleeve

Base Cost: 11 **Augmentation Points:** 6
Sleeve Aspect: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*
Physical Skills: 11 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Exceptional Genegineering, and your choice of Cosmetic Customization or Striking Looks

Epsilon Biosleeve

Base Cost: 14 **Augmentation Points:** 8
Sleeve Aspect: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*
Physical Skills: 12 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Exceptional Genegineering, and your choice of Cosmetic Customization or Striking Looks

Alpha Cybersleeve

Base Cost: 5 **Augmentation Points:** 3
Sleeve Aspect: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Dubious Construction*
Physical Skills: 7 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic
Special: +1 bonus to AR*

Beta Cybersleeve

Base Cost: 6 **Augmentation Points:** 4
Sleeve Aspect: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance*
Physical Skills: 8 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic
Special: +1 bonus to AR*

Gamma Cybersleeve

Base Cost: 8 **Augmentation Points:** 5
Sleeve Aspect: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance*
Physical Skills: 9 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, and your choice of Bio-Skin Sheath or Cosmetic Customization
Special: +2 bonus to AR*

Delta Cybersleeve

Base Cost: 10 **Augmentation Points:** 7
Sleeve Aspect: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance*
Physical Skills: 10 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Optimized Power Systems, and your choice of Bio-Skin Sheath or Cosmetic Customization
Special: +2 bonus to AR*

Epsilon Cybersleeve

Base Cost: 13 **Augmentation Points:** 9
Sleeve Aspect: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance*
Physical Skills: 11 ranks to be distributed among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Optimized Power Systems, and your choice of Bio-Skin Sheath or Cosmetic Customization
Special: +2 bonus to AR*

* This bonus does not stack with the AR bonus provided by wearing armor.

AUGMENTATIONS

Advanced technology brings with it the ability for mankind to better treat injury or even direct its own evolution through elective augmentation.

A lost arm might be replaced by a computer-controlled machine limb capable of interfacing directly with the nervous system. Blindness might be cured by replacing the eye with an optical sensor capable of not only seeing as well as a normal eye, but at much larger distances or even in different spectrums of light.

This section contains a number of sample Augmentations available to your character.

Cyberware and Bioware

There are two basic types of Augmentations.

Cybernetic Augmentations either enhance a cybersleeve or introduce synthetic materials into a living body via an injection of nanomachines, which replace existing biological tissue with synthetic structures. In cases that require large amounts of tissue replacement, such as with replacement limbs, the tissue will be mostly removed through surgery. Nanomachines will then be injected where synthetic and biological materials meet, bridging the gap between the synthetic systems and the biological nervous system.

Biotech Augmentations (bioware) are created through genetic manipulation. These sorts of genetic modifications are performed via the introduction of a retrovirus specifically designed to modify the human genome, or they can be implemented into the sleeve during its initial design.

Bioware augs consist of purely biological material, which means they cannot be installed on a cybersleeve or an artificial limb. It also means they cannot be damaged by Savant Programs.

Purchasing Augmentations

Pure humans can have their bodies augmented, and you may want to add an aftermarket aug to a sleeve.

When you purchase an aug without using the APs provided by a new sleeve, it is considered an “aftermarket” purchase.

Aftermarket augmentation requires that you have both the gear and the know-how. Acquiring them may be a little trickier for restricted augs, but the install process is generally the same.

The Cost to add an Augmentation to your body or sleeve is equal to the total number of Augmentations you already have plus twice the Augmentation Value (AV) of the aug.

Some augs (such as Apotheosis) do not count toward the max number of augs you can support. These augs also do not count when determining the total number of augs you have for the purposes of determining Cost.

Aug Cost = Total Number of Augs + (AV x 2)

Installation or application is generally a simple matter for a trained medical professional, though most will refuse to apply restricted Augmentations if you aren’t licensed (pg. 172).

The procedure generally requires a few hours and an Education test (Diff = 1 + Aug’s AV).

Augmentation Limit: Remember that a sleeve can only support a number of Augmentations equal to its Endurance x2.

Purchasing Upgrades

Sometimes you can only afford the basic version of an Augmentation up-front, but plan to upgrade it later.

The Cost of applying an aftermarket upgrade is equal to the total number of augs you already have plus the AV of the aug you are upgrading, plus the total AV of all the upgrades you are applying, x2.

Upgrade Cost = Total Number of Augs + (Total AV of Aug + Upgrade(s) x 2)

Type	Augmentation	Base AV
✠	Adrenal Boost Module	1[3]
●	Alternative Mobility System	1[6]
✠	Apotheosis	3[1,5]
✠	Auditory Amp and Filter Module	1
●	Arterial Toxin Filter	1[3]
✠	Beholder Sensory Suite	2[2]
✠	Bio-Skin Sheath	1[5]
✠	Cogware Partition [R]	3[2]
●	Cosmetic Customization	1[5]
✠	Crypto-Laser Link	1
●	Custom Built	1[2]
✠	Data Jack and Storage	1
✠	Emergency Life Support (ELS) System	2[3]
✠	Esper Vent	1
☼	Exceptional Genegineering	1[3,5]
●	Extra Limb	2[2, 6]
✠	Fibro-Muscle Weave	2[3]
✠	Fully Synthetic	Special[4,5]
☼	Gills Gene-Graft	1[3]
✠	Gyroscopic Stabilizers	2
✠	Hidden Weapon System [R]	1
✠	Light Screen Camouflage [R]	2
●	Massive Size	2[6]
✠	Medichine Factory	2[3]
✠	Nano-Cyber Limb	1[3]
✠	Neura-Surge [R]	2
✠	Optimized Power System	1[5]
✠	Particle Detection and Analysis Suite	1
●	Performance Enhanced	1
☼	Pheromone Control and Sensitivity	1[3]
☼	Physiological Behavior Mods	1[3]
☼	Poison Gland [R]	2[3]
✠	Reinforced Skeleton	2
✠	Retinal Implant	1
☼	Retractable Claws	1
✠	SIM-Cell Module	1[2]
●	Skinweave Armor	1
✠	SMR Transceiver and Translation Suite	1
✠	Smuggler's Compartment	1
✠	Sonar Reception Array	2
✠	Stillness Body Lock System	1
●	Striking Looks	1[5]
✠	Subdermal Plating	2
☼	Synthesis	3[2,3]
✠	Targeting Support System [R]	2
●	Tiny Size	2[6]

[Versa-Link Log: 13:45-05,24,98]

[Micah] – Good to hear from you.

[Tess] – How's your head?

[Micah] – Fine. The headaches stop after the first week.

[Tess] – That's good. Uhg. You got bugs in your head.

[Micah] – Yeah. ?

[Tess] – You going to resleeve?

[Micah] – Maybe when I can afford the rep hit. Best I can do now is an Ingot, and I'm already short and ugly.

[Tess] – Ha! I'd consider it myself if I could get a Vixen. ?

[Micah] – Promise me you'd get a Vixen and I'd take the hit on getting you Apotheosized.

[1] Free with Sleeve Purchase

[2] Requires Apotheosis

[3] Human or Biosleeve Only

[4] Cybersleeve Only

[5] Does not count against your aug limit or the number of augs you have when making aftermarket purchases.

[6] Violates the HPA when applied as bioware to a human body or biosleeve.

[R] Restricted

☼ Bioware Augmentation

✠ Cyberware Augmentation

● Can be taken as either a bioware or cyberware Augmentation.

Adrenal Boost Module

Base AV: 1 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

Enhancements to your adrenaline system allow you to trigger an adrenaline surge at will. This surge of adrenaline increases your reaction time and muscle strength, but also tends to make you shaky and anxious until the adrenaline clears from your system.

You can activate this Augmentation as a Free Action. Upon doing so, you gain a +1 bonus on your Athletics and Melee Skills, and the amount of stress absorbed by any Physical Consequence you take is increased by +1 for the duration.

These bonuses last for a number of rounds equal to your Endurance, after which you gain an Aspect called *Got the Shakes* until the end of the scene.

Alternative Mobility System

Base AV: 1

Your legs have been replaced or augmented with biological or cybernetic non-humanoid limbs.

Applying this Augmentation as bioware to a human body or biosleeve is a violation of the HPA.

You gain a Persistent Aspect that relates to your method of movement. Examples include *Wheeled(P), Cyberspider Legs(P), Snake-Like Lower Body(P), Tracked Mobility(P),* etc.

Upgrades

Flight Capable (+2): Some addition to your body or sleeve, such as thrusters or wings, has rendered you capable of flight. In addition to gaining a Persistent Aspect that describes this Augmentation, you can fly at a speed equal to about twice the average human's top running speed. This upgrade provides a +3 bonus to Hustle, Run, or other related tests.

Apotheosis

Base AV: 3, or free with sleeve

Note: Apotheosis does not count against the total number of Augmentations a sleeve can support.

Your sleeve has undergone Apotheosis (pg. 213) and features a mindset and mnemonic core. You gain the *Apotheosized* Aspect, which reflects the fact that your mind is now software running on a machine instead of a biological brain.

The biggest drawback to undergoing Apotheosis is a susceptibility to attacks normally only dangerous to computers, as well as the prejudice of Purists.

The Mindset

The primary function of the mindset is to host the ego and provide it with the capabilities of an onboard computer system. In most ways, the mindset behaves like an implanted PPC.

Digital data can be projected from the mindset directly into the user's augmented visual cortex (or synthetic equivalent) so that it appears in his field of view. This provides the user with an augmented reality interface.

Additionally, the mindset is capable of storing data (including sensory recordings called sensies) and running programs. It connects to the Extranet wirelessly, but also provides the user with a data jack at the base of the skull. Commands are given by thought and interpreted by an onboard Agent (pg. 201).

The Apotheosis aug comes with a free Alpha Agent (you can purchase a better one) and a data jack (pg. 216).

The Mnemonic Core

Deep in the core of the mindset network is a hardened and shielded memory module designed for a singular task: to store the person's personality and memories. Should this core be removed and placed into a prepared sleeve, the mnemonic core will direct the resurrection chamber to construct a copy of the old mindset. Once complete, the new mindset interfaces with the core and brings the ego back online in the new sleeve.

All digital data stored in the mindset also makes the transition. This is a boon to Savants in particular, because their SINC is also backed up and restored upon resleeving.

Despite every attempt at making this transition as easy as possible, resleeving is still a psychologically traumatizing experience. Getting comfortable in the new body also takes a bit of time. When taken as a whole, though, this technology results in virtual immortality.

See page 146 for more on the process of resleeving.

Upgrades

Cognet Capable (+1) [Restricted]: Your mindset is capable of running a Cognet, a restricted but secure multi-channel communications package common among tech-savvy criminals and military forces. You can send text, audio, and live video over the Cognet, confident that it can't be intercepted by an unauthorized third party.

Remote Backup (+1): Your mnemonic core is capable of performing wireless uploads to a secure server while you sleep. Should you be killed and your core lost, you can be restored from a remote backup. In this case, you'll only be in the dark about events that occurred since the last time you slept.

Of course, this only works if your mindset has a reliable Extranet connection.

Kill Switch (+1): While not something you'd likely have implanted by choice, a kill switch is just that—it kills you. If anyone with the proper password wishes, he may simply contact your mindset via the Extranet and enter it. Doing so shuts down the mindset and wipes the mnemonic core.

Auditory Amp and Filter Module

Base AV: 1

You have an implant that replaces the majority of your inner ear (or synthetic equivalent). This Augmentation not only allows you to hear sounds a normal person couldn't, but allows you to filter out sound from specific sources such as background noise.

You gain the *Auditory Amplifier and Filtering Module(P)* Aspect.

Arterial Toxin Filter

Base AV: 1 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

A nanocybernetic filtering system is implanted into your heart, which filters the blood as it flows through. This process cleanses the blood of any toxins or unwelcome bacteria.

This filter not only helps you resist the effects of foreign substances, but the reduced chance of infection can aid the body's natural ability to heal.

You gain the *Arterial Toxin Filter(P)* Aspect.

Beholder Sensory Suite

Base AV: 2

Dozens of tiny sensors are placed all over your sleeve. These sensors feed visual data to a central processing unit at the base of the skull, which interfaces with the mindset and visual cortex (or synthetic equivalent) in an effort to help it interpret the data feed. The end result is full 360 degree vision.

You gain the *Beholder Sensory Suite(P) Persistent* Aspect.

Upgrades

Hyper-Aware (+1): Not only do you have full 360 degree vision, but the implanted processing unit also features an enhanced interface that allows you to better notice small details. You gain a +3 bonus on initiative tests in physical conflicts as long as it is possible for you to see the threat.

Bio-Skin Sheath

Base AV: 1

Bio-skin is a natural skin-like substance that can be used to cover cybernetic limbs (pg. 217) or even entire cybersleeves. While it is capable of tactile sensation, it is easily identifiable by its lack of hair, glossy texture, and visible seams.

Bio-skin can also register as synthetic to devices such as chemical sniffers, SMR transceivers, and to animals (or augmented people) with a greater-than-human sense of smell. The primary benefit of the bio-skin is the improvement of natural tactile sensation, greatly enhancing a synthetic limb's sense of touch. This sense of touch also makes the sleeve feel much more alive to the wearer, which in turn helps the wearer feel a bit more human.

When used to fully sheath a cybersleeve, the Synthetic Biology Aspect that comes with the Fully Synthetic Augmentation (pg. 217) is no longer Persistent.

If you wish to cover a single cybernetic limb, you should instead purchase the Bio-Skinned upgrade for your limb (pg. 219).

This Augmentation does not count against your aug limit.

Upgrades

Seemingly Real (+1) (Restricted): Your cybersleeve is covered in a bio-skin sheath that has the appearance of real human skin. Your sleeve does not have the Inhuman Appearance Aspect, and to the naked eye or even a SMR transceiver, is indistinguishable from a real living human body.

X-rays however, can penetrate the skin and see beneath. For this reason, it's a good idea to outfit a seemingly real cybersleeve with a charlatan.

Charlatan (+2) (Restricted): See pg. 223.

Cogware Partition

Base AV: 3 [Restricted]

Your mindset has a partition set up to store cogware, a special type of mnemonic software designed to stream a self-contained packet of data about a specific subject directly into your conscious mind. Cogware allows you to perform tasks you would not normally know how to perform.

When you activate this Augmentation, you load a specific piece of cogware into your mindset's cogware partition. This takes a few seconds, after which time you gain an Aspect representative of the type of cogware you have loaded, such as *Kung-fu Master, Shuttle Pilot, Brain Surgeon*, etc.

Each piece of cogware provides a different Aspect, and must be purchased separately. Standard pieces of cogware provide a standard Aspect, and have a Cost of 4. High-quality cogware provides a Persistent Aspect, and has a Cost of 8. Both types are restricted. You get a single piece of standard-quality cogware for free when you purchase this Augmentation.

You may only load one piece of cogware at a time, and you must activate this aug each time a different piece is loaded.

Running cogware stresses your mind and internal systems, requiring tremendous amounts of processing power as it feeds data directly into your conscious mind in real time.

You must perform a Cohesion test to activate this Augmentation. If you fail, the cogware still loads, but you suffer an amount of mental stress equal to the amount by which you failed. If you Stall, you suffer the stress and it fails to load.

Activation Time: Simple Action **Diff**: 4
Duration: Scene

Upgrades

Multi-Partition Cog-Drive (+2): Your mindset is capable of loading two pieces of cogware at once (Execution Diff: 6).

Cosmetic Customization

Base AV: 1

Exaggerated crystalline canines, glowing reptilian eyes, chrome skin, glossy black horns—these custom features are common among the more rebellious members of society, and especially among backers of the transhumanist/posthumanist agenda.

For the most part, cosmetic customizations are generally just that: cosmetic. They don't really serve any purpose except to look cool and make a statement.

When you select this Augmentation, you gain an Aspect that describes your cosmetic modification(s).

This Augmentation does not count against your aug limit.

Purchasing this aug more than once for a human body or biosleeve violates the HPA.

Crypto-Laser Link

Base AV: 1

Somewhere on your sleeve is an IR laser transceiver. When aimed at another person's crypto-laser transceiver, the two of you are capable of encrypted, invisible (to the naked eye), and silent wireless communication.

If you have a mindset, you can send and receive messages with mental commands. Otherwise, you'll need to route the communication through a PPC.

Custom Built

Base AV: 1 [Sleeve Only]

Your sleeve was custom-built to perform some sort of task. It could have been developed to work on high-gravity worlds, survive in harsh climates, or perhaps for more specialized tasks such as moving about unseen or being especially intimidating.

The sleeve gains an Aspect that best describes the task it was specially built to perform.

Data Jack and Storage

Base AV: 1, or free with Apotheosis

Note: Anyone who has undergone Apotheosis gets this Augmentation for free.

Somewhere on your body or sleeve is a port that can accept a wired connection to an outside system. This port connects directly to a data storage device hidden somewhere inside your body or sleeve. If you have a mindset, the data port can also be set to allow read or write access to one of its partitions.

Upgrades

Secured (+0): A portion of your storage device is partitioned to include a highly secure, heavily encrypted, file system that even the owner cannot access without the right passkeys. The keys are set during the upload process.

Emergency Life Support (ELS) System

Base AV: 2 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

Note: If you have the Synthesis Augmentation (pg. 224), this Augmentation's AV is reduced to 1.

The emergency life support (ELS) system is a device installed in the torso, and attached directly to the heart. In the event that you are exposed to life-threatening danger from poison, toxins, starvation, or dehydration, the device automatically activates. The ELS stops the heart, and begins pumping heavily oxygenated blood directly to the brain, organs, and muscles via a secondary circulatory system. It also administers critical nutrients to the rest of the body, making up for a lack of food and water, and dumps a supply of natural pain killers to help you persevere until you can get to safety.

Once activated, the system allows you to survive up to three hours without oxygen. It also hydrates your system as well as a gallon of water and provides as many vitamins and minerals as a well-balanced meal.

The pain killers last for about twelve hours, during which time your Severe Physical Consequence (if you have one) is not considered Persistent.

The system also prevents you from suffering attacks from poison for twelve hours.

Once activated, the ELS cannot be used again for 48 hours. During this time the user needs to eat and drink more than usual, as the ELS resupplies from the user's blood stream.

Esper Vent

Base AV: 1 [Restricted]

Parts of your sleeve's anatomy have been removed and replaced with hollow synthetic replacements. The extra space is used to store an esper swarm, and comes with vents through which they can emerge from your body.

Esper vents are commonly (but not always) placed in the arms, with the arm muscles replaced by much smaller (but equally strong) nanocybernetic fiber bundles. The esper swarm can lie dormant in the arms, and emerge when the user desires.

Upgrades

Charlatan (+1) (Restricted): See pg. 223.

Exceptional Genegineering

Base AV: 1 [Biosleeve Only]

Your bioware Augs were seamlessly implemented, and your sleeve adjusted to the modifications with little effort.

Once per scene, you may invoke an Aspect gained from a bioware Augmentation without spending a Fate Point.

This Augmentation also increases the total number of Augmentations your sleeve can support by +1, and does not itself count against that total number.

This aug may only be installed on a sleeve, and is not available to a Pure character.

Extra Limb

Base AV: 2 [Restricted on Biosleeves]

You have one or more additional prehensile limbs. These limbs could be the result of extreme genetic tampering (which violates the HPA), or grafted-on cybernetics.

You gain a Persistent Aspect that describes the limb, such as *Prehensile Tail(P)* or *Cybernetic Tentacle(P)*.

You can invoke this Aspect as appropriate to the limb to grant a bonus on grappling, climbing, running, or complex work where an extra hand might come in handy.

Fibro-Muscle Weave

Base AV: 2 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

Your muscles are woven with synthetic fibers that expand and retract with far more strength than human muscle tissue.

You gain the *Fibro-Muscle Weave* Aspect, which can be invoked on all Athletics tests to represent your super-human strength.

The GM should also allow you to invoke this Aspect on attack tests with melee or thrown weapons, but only after it is determined that you have hit your target. After all, while the fibro-muscle weave certainly makes you stronger, it doesn't do much to improve your accuracy.

Upgrades

Titan Weave (+2): Your muscles are more synthetic than biological, making you capable of tremendous feats of strength.

Your *Fibro-Muscle Weave* Aspect becomes Persistent.

Fully Synthetic

Base AV: N/A [Cybersleeve Only]

Your sleeve is completely synthetic, featuring no biological components. It consists of a non-magnetic metal skeleton, driven by synthetic muscles capable of expanding and retracting just like biological muscle. This combination gives you the fine motor control of a biological entity, but also makes you stronger and more durable.

All Fully Synthetic sleeves gain the *Synthetic Biology(P)* Aspect. This Aspect represents the composition of the sleeve, as well as the tendency for an ego to more easily fragment while in a synthetic sleeve. This Aspect can be compelled during most Cohesion tests, especially when resleeving. It can also be used to defend against certain threats, or cause difficulties when dealing with those prejudiced against posthumans.

Your ego is housed in a cyberbrain featuring a mnemonic core similar to those in Apotheosized biosleeves.

You do not need to eat, drink, or breathe. You are also immune to drugs and poisons. You are not harmed by exposure to vacuum, and suffer no adverse effects from prolonged exposure to microgravity.

All of these advantages come with a downside, however. Unable to touch, taste, smell, or even see the world the same way a living being does, the experience of being fully synthetic erodes the humanity of the inhabiting ego.

To compensate, your Agent must constantly work to repair the ego, frayed by the completely unnatural experience of living in a synthetic body. You must still "sleep" for at least two hours each day, during which time your Agent works to repair the psychological damage accrued on the previous day.

While this keeps the ego from degenerating into complete insanity, it can only do so much.

This Augmentation does not count against your aug limit.

Upgrades

Reinforced Substrate (+1 to Cost of Sleeve): Your skeleton is designed to take a beating, featuring reinforced structural members and more robust joint systems.

Your Endurance is increased by +2, but you also gain the *Slow* and *Heavy(P)* Persistent Aspect.

Remember that the increase to your Endurance can also increase the number of physical stress boxes you have.

High Tensile Muscular Fibers (+2 to Cost of Sleeve): Your synthetic muscles are much stronger than those normally featured on a sleeve of your type. You gain the same benefits that a biosleeve gains from the Fibro-Muscle Weave Augmentation.

Gills Gene-Graft

Base AV: 1 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

Your neck sports a set of fish- like gills, gifted to you by the marvels of modern science. Through genetic manipulation you are now capable of drawing oxygen out of water filtered through your gills. You can still breathe air as well.

Technically this Augmentation violates the HPA, but was one of very few extreme genetic mods to be granted an exception.

Gyroscopic Stabilizers

Base AV: 2

Your wrists and elbows are outfitted with small gyroscopes designed to stabilize your hands when performing tasks that require motor control. They also reduce the effect of recoil from firearms when fired on full auto.

You gain the *Gyro-Stabilized* Aspect, which can be invoked any time you need to perform a delicate task, when making a full-auto attack test (pg. 136), or when performing the test to place the *In My Sights* Aspect when taking aim (pg. 148).

Hidden Weapon System

Base AV: 1 [Restricted]

Your sleeve features a hidden weapon of some sort. It may be a retractable blade hidden in your forearm, a shoulder- mounted PAc gun that emerges from your back, or any other sort of weapon that could be hidden away inside the body.

Continued next page...

You must first acquire the weapon, after which you must purchase this Augmentation to have it installed.

You may purchase this Augmentation multiple times, but the GM must agree that there is enough room in your body to install all of the weapons.

Upgrades

Charlatan (+1) (Restricted): See pg. 223.

Light Screen Camouflage

Base AV: 2 [Restricted]

Your skin has been woven with a network of dozens of tiny magnetic field generators. These generators bend the light around you, rendering you nearly invisible to visible and IR light, and allowing you to blend in with your surroundings.

You gain a +3 bonus on tests to remain unseen while not moving, or a +2 bonus if you are moving.

Massive Size

Base AV: 1 [Sleeve Only, Restricted on Biosleeves]

Your sleeve is huge, towering 3 to 4 meters in height. Cybersleeves of this size are rare, but not unheard of. They can be useful in situations where both heavy lifting and fine motor control are needed.

Massive-sized biosleeves are illegal per the Humanity Preservation Act. Still, sufficiently motivated aberrants have been known to inhabit massive bodies designed to hunt, kill, and/ or fight more effectively.

Sleeves with this Augmentation are Size 1 and gain a +1 bonus to the WR of all melee weapon attacks. In addition, the sleeve gains the *Massive* Aspect.

Medichine Factory

Base AV: 2 [Human or Biosleeve Only]

You have a small nanomachine factory implanted somewhere within your body. These "medichines" patrol your blood stream and, should you become injured, rush to aid your body's natural healing mechanisms to stop bleeding, close wounds, and ward off infection.

This Augmentation allows your body to heal from wounds at an incredible rate. The amount of time required for a Physical Consequence to degrade to a lower severity is reduced by 1 time increment (pg. 149).

Nano-Cyber Limb

Base AV: 1 [Humans or Biosleeve Only]

One of your sleeve's limbs has been replaced with a nanocybernetic prosthetic, a synthetic limb comprised of a non-magnetic metal skeleton driven by artificial muscles. The prosthetic is controlled via the nervous system by a nerve-machine interface, and is powered with a combination of a power cell and broadcast power receiver.

While only capable of transmitting a vague sense of touch (or pain), synthetic limbs tend to be stronger than natural limbs and are capable of bending or rotating in unnatural ways.

You gain an Aspect, such as *Cyber-Arm* or *Shiny New Leg*, which represents your nano-cyber limb. This Aspect might be invoked on attack tests when punching or swinging a weapon with a nanocybernetic arm, when jumping with a synthetic leg, or any time the additional strength and versatility of the prosthetic limb could be of benefit.

Note: Your nano-cyber limbs can be built to support other types of augs, such as Fibro-Muscle Weaves or Esper Vents.

Upgrades

Bioskinned (+1): Your limb is covered in bioskin (pg. 215), which not only feels more natural, but also imparts greater sensitivity. The skin may appear natural or obviously synthetic. It is illegal to apply realistic-looking bioskin over an entire cybersleeve, but this is not the case with a single limb.

Multiple Limbs (+1): You have not one, but two of the same type of limb replaced. Instead of a regular Aspect, you gain a Persistent Aspect, such as *Nanocybernetic Arms(P)*, to represent this Augmentation.

Neura-Surge

Base AV: 2 [Restricted]

Your body or sleeve, whether biological or cybernetic, is threaded with an augmented nervous system (or synthetic equivalent). When activated, the neura-surge system sends your mind and body/sleeve into overdrive, allowing you to move and process information so quickly that the world around you appears to slow down.

Activating this Augmentation is an Instant Action, and may even be used to interrupt another character's turn. Once activated, you may immediately perform a Simple Action. You may not activate this Augmentation more than once per turn.

The neura-surge stresses the muscles and nervous system of the body/sleeve, or the data transmitters and synthetic musculature subsystems of a cybersleeve, to their physical limits. As such, you must perform an Endurance test to activate this Augmentation. If you fail, the neura-surge activates, but you suffer an amount of physical stress equal to the amount by which you failed.

The activation difficulty is increased by +1 for each subsequent use of this Augmentation in the same scene.

Activation Time: Instant Action **Diff**: 4
Duration: Turn

Optimized Power System

Base AV: 1

Your cyberware Augmentations depend on a top-of-the-line power management system that distributes and stores power more efficiently than most off-the-shelf power systems.

Once per scene, you may invoke an Aspect gained from a cyberware Augmentation without spending a Fate Point.

This Augmentation also increases the total number of Augmentations your body/sleeve can support by +1, and does not itself count against your total number of Augmentations.

Particle Detection and Analysis Suite

Base AV: 1

Your olfactory glands (or cybernetic equivalent) are bolstered by a highly sensitive chemical analysis device. Not only does this Augmentation grant you a heightened sense of smell, so acute that you can track by scent. It can also output data to a PPC or mindset, allowing you to determine the chemical composition of any gasses you breathe.

You gain the *Particle Detection and Analysis Module* Aspect.

Upgrades

Integrated Filter (+1): Your module is able to filter out harmful gasses, making you immune to any harm that may come from breathing any known hazardous gasses.

The module also sterilizes the air you breathe, which kills airborne diseases.

Performance Enhanced

Base AV: 1 [Sleeve Only]

Your sleeve was well built, and is of a higher quality than most of its class.

You gain 1 additional Skill Rank to place in a Physical Skill of your choosing. This bonus allows you to surpass the normal maximum rating of 5.

You may purchase this Augmentation a maximum of three times, each time enhancing a different Skill.

Upgrades

Top of the Line (+2): Your sleeve gains an additional +1 bonus rank (to a max of 7) in a Skill that already has a bonus from the Performance Enhanced Augmentation.

Pheromone Control & Sensitivity

Base AV: 1

You are able to emit the types of pheromones you desire, subtly influencing the emotions of those around you. In addition, you can actively sense other's pheromones.

Once per scene, you may use this bioware Augmentation to gain a +2 bonus on any test to convince a biological being to do as you wish, or to determine another person's emotional state.

Upgrades

Aura (+1): You emit high levels of pheromones that affect everyone around you. You may spend a Fate Point to gain a +1 bonus on all Diplomacy or Guile tests or contests when socializing with biological beings for the duration of the scene.

If you have the Exceptional Engineering, you may use it to activate your aura for free instead of getting a free invoke.

Physiological Behavior Mods

Base AV: 1

Your genetic code features modifications tailored to trigger specific emotional responses, such as a desire to bond with a group, an urge to hunt, or an overactive libido.

You gain an Aspect that reflects the sort of behavior your sleeve was built for, such as *Pack Mentality, Insatiable Curiosity, or Solitary Predator*.

Poison Gland

Base AV: 2 [Restricted]

Your body or sleeve is capable of producing some sort of toxin. The most common version of this gland can be activated at will, which releases poison into your saliva. It can then be administered via a kiss or bite.

The basic version of this Augmentation allows you to produce two uses of a Potency 4 poison per day.

Upgrades

Lethal Dose (+1): Your poison has a Potency of 6.

Increased Production (+1): You can produce four uses of your poison each day.

Reinforced Skeleton

Base AV: 2

Your body or sleeve has been heavily fortified, its bones (or frame) bonded with a composite of ceramics and non-magnetic metals that make it nearly indestructible. While this doesn't provide much in the way of protection against slashes and punctures, a tremendous amount of force is required to break your bones.

The amount of stress absorbed when you take a Severe or Extreme Physical Consequence is increased by +3.

Retinal Implant

Base AV: 1

One of your eyes has been replaced by a nanocybernetic prosthetic. This eye functions like a normal human eye, but is capable of changing zoom levels and can detect a greater level of detail in the dark.

In addition, your eye can pair with other computers to function as an entoptic display and AR interface device.

You gain the *Retinal Implant* Aspect.

Note: Without this implant, a cybersleeve's eyes have the same resolution and capabilities as a normal biological eye.

Upgrades

IR Receiver (+1): Your eye implant allows you to see infrared light. You gain a +2 bonus on rolls to notice objects of a temperature different than the environment, such as a living body in the jungle or the warmth generated by a recently used vehicle compared to one that has been sitting for a while.

Optic Drone (+1): Your prosthetic eye is capable of discharging a tiny reconnaissance drone that looks like a winged spider with one large eye. With a command, your eye splits open and the tiny drone flies free of your head. While deployed, you can see what the drone sees.

The drone can move up to about a kilometer before losing contact with you.

The drone is controlled by remote, and is incapable of independent action. It is destroyed if it takes even a single point of physical stress, and has the following Skills:

Athletics: 2 Endurance: 0,
Perception: 4 Stealth: 3

If destroyed, you gain the *One Eyed* Aspect until the drone is replaced. It can be replaced at a Cost of 4 so long as you have access to someone who can sell you a replacement. However, the GM should be lenient and allow it to be replaced for free with a bit of down time (about a week) in a location where you could reasonably acquire a replacement.

While the drone is active, you can see through both the drone's eye and your own, though while attempting to pay attention to both locations you gain the Persistent Aspect of *Distracted(P)*.

X-Ray Sight (+2): Your eye implant emits X-Rays and reads the backsplash, effectively allowing you to see through most objects. This is a handy way of detecting hidden weapons and Augmentations, particularly cyberware.

You may spend a Fate Point to be able to see through walls, clothing, doors, and so forth. Generally you can see through 1 ft of material, though this may vary depending on the density of the material. For instance, you may only be able to see through 1 inch of lead, but 2 feet of wood.

When this Augmentation is activated, you gain the Persistent Aspect *X-Ray Vision (P)*.

Activation Time: Simple Action **Diff:** None
Duration: Scene

Retractable Claws

Base AV: 1 [Restricted]

Your hands have been outfitted with a set of razor-sharp catlike claws that emerge from beneath your normal human(oid) fingernails.

These claws have a Weapon Rating of 2, and are a favorite among assassins and spies.

Note: If you also have the Poison Gland Augmentation, you can administer your poison with a claw attack instead of a bite or kiss.

SIM-Cell Module

Base AV: 1, Requires a mindset

Your mindset has a special partition and second mnemonic core designed specifically to host another ego.

The SIM residing in the SIM-cell module can either dwell within his home environment, or view the real world through his host's senses. He can make use of the host's mindset as if it were his own, as so long as the host allows.

The host maintains full control of his body, senses, and systems. The host's Agent may aid the visitor, but only if the host allows. The host may also cut off the visitor's access to his senses whenever he wishes.

While inside a SIM-cell, the visiting SIM may launch Savant Programs or do anything else he would normally be able to do while hosted on a computer system. This includes ghosting in AR or just resting in his home environment.

Essentially, residing in a SIM-Cell module is the same for the SIM as being hosted on any other system. He just gains the added ability to view the world from his host's perspective, and the two can communicate without any wireless signals ever leaving the host's mindset.

Skinweave Armor

Base AV: 1

Your skin (or bio-skin sheath) has been woven with a mesh of genetically bolstered spider silk and graphene. This does not affect the outward appearance of your skin, but makes it incredibly strong and resistant to damage.

You gain an Armor Rating of +1, which stacks with armor gained from any other source.

SMR Transceiver and Translation Suite

Base AV: 1

Sensors located in the corner of your eye (or your eye itself if you have a prosthetic eye) emit and receive sub-millimeter radiation, allowing you to see through some objects such as clothing, paper, cardboard, wood, masonry, plastic, and ceramics.

Though it cannot penetrate skin, water, or metal, and is hampered by moisture in the air, this Augmentation is a handy way to detect hidden weapons and objects.

Unfortunately, this system has poorer resolution than normal sight, so it can actually be more difficult to see fine details.

Smuggler's Compartment

Base AV: 1 [Restricted]

Be it in your thigh, somewhere in your torso, or some other location, you have a compartment in your body in which you can store an item, or bundle of items, about the size of your fist or a small pistol.

This compartment is disguised and insulated, and will not set off metal detectors. However, its contents can still be seen with X-Ray scanners unless it is outfitted with a charlatan upgrade.

Upgrades

Charlatan (+1): This small device employs bleeding edge light screen technology. The charlatan uses a variant of standard light screen tech to fool X-ray, SMR, or other radiation-based sensor systems, making them see a hologram of what should be there instead of what is really there.

It will not fool the naked eye, but is useful for smuggling things through checkpoints that utilize scanners.

Sonar Reception Array

Base AV: 2

Your body or sleeve is outfitted with a set of tiny sensors along the face and down the sides of the neck. These sensors analyze sound and compile the data before sending the data to the brain's visual cortex. The user perceives this audio data as visual images, granting him real time sonar.

This allows the character to "see" in the dark, and aids in perceiving objects covered by a light screen.

You gain the *Sonar Reception Array(P)* Persistent Aspect.

Stillness Body Lock System

Base AV: 1

Your body or sleeve is outfitted with nanocybernetically modified joints that can be selectively locked at will. In addition, the system features an implant that stores a small amount of oxygen with each breath. This allows you to hold your breath for an extended amount of time.

This system is popular with transhumans deep into the poser scene, who use the augment to perfectly halt their body in a frozen pose.

It's also popular with precision shooters, who can use the system to better acquire a target by eliminating any extraneous motion caused by involuntary muscle movements or breathing.

You gain the *Stillness Body Lock System* Aspect.

Striking Looks

Base AV: 1

Note: A cybersleeve must have Bio-Skin Sheath (pg. 215) with the Seemingly Real upgrade to take this Augmentation.

Whether male, female, neither, or both—your sleeve is especially attractive.

You gain the *Striking Looks* Aspect.

This Augmentation does not count against your aug limit.

Upgrades

Absolutely Stunning (+1): You are almost unnaturally attractive, a living example of perfection and sex appeal. You gain the Persistent Aspect *Absolutely Stunning(P)* instead of the regular Aspect that comes standard.

Subdermal Plating

Base AV: 2

You have a layer of thin flexible armor woven beneath your skin or outer exposed layer. While not immediately visible to the casual observer, this armor can deflect bullets and blades, potentially preventing attacks from causing anything more than simple abrasions or bruises.

The amount of stress you absorb by taking a Mild or Moderate Physical Consequence is increased by +2. For example, a Moderate Consequence would absorb 6 stress instead of 4.

Upgrades

Composite Plating (+1): Your subdermal plating is reinforced with lightweight composite materials, allowing you to use thicker plates for the same weight.

The amount of stress you absorb by taking a Mild or Moderate Consequence is increased by +3 instead of +2.

Synthesis

Base AV: 3, Requires a mindset [Biosleeve Only]

The Synthesis process weaves a mesh of nanocybernetic fibers through the living tissues of the body, transforming the entire body into a seamless blend of man and machine. This process makes the body tougher and stronger, but also allows for a finer degree of control and sensitivity.

Synthesis is a common Augmentation among high-Rep transhumans, and is seen by many as representing a perfect balance of organic and synthetic biology—the pinnacle of human evolution. This belief also means that many, especially hardcore Purists, view the Synthesized as being even more threatening to the future of the human race than a SIM or someone who has been decanted into a cybersleeve.

So while transhumanists often hold the Synthesized in awe, Purists tend to view them with disgust. More than a dozen (reported) Synthesized transhumans have been killed by Purifier attacks in the last few years.

A Synthesized body or sleeve looks like a normal human body, but the skin has some metallic luster and the eyes tend to feature a slight glow about them. Synthesis makes the body faster, stronger, more durable, and enhances the senses.

You also gain the *Synthesized Biological Perfection* Aspect. This Aspect represents your hybrid physiological nature, the fact that Synthesis improves on the human body's capabilities in almost every way, and the fact that Synthesized bodies and sleeves are often a source of controversy.

You are immune to poisons and disease, and are no longer adversely affected by prolonged exposure to microgravity. As long as you are within range of a broadcast power field, you only need to eat, drink, and sleep half as much as a normal person.

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Targeting Support System

Base AV: 2 [Restricted]

Sensors in the hand, arm, and mindset are capable of syncing with a targeting support module (pg. 208) to enhance your ability to aim a firearm.

When a target is selected, the guidance software kicks in and snaps the weapon on target, guiding your arm to keep your enemy in the crosshairs.

You gain a +1 bonus on all ranged attacks with firearms equipped with a synced targeting support module.

Tiny Size

Base AV: 2 [Restricted in Biosleeves]

Your sleeve is very small, less than a meter in height. Cybersleeves of this size are useful for sneaking into secured locations, or for getting into areas too small for human-sized sleeves. Generally this Augmentation is applied to drones instead of sleeves to avoid the psychological trauma of resleeving, but there are some cases where resleeving an ego in a tiny body can be beneficial.

Tiny-sized biosleeves are illegal per the Humanity Preservation Act. But just because something is illegal doesn't mean it's never done. Aberrants ignore the HPA and seek to remake themselves into their ideal form. If that form is tiny, so be it.

The size of the sleeve must be large enough to house the mindset, which limits it to being no smaller than that of a human baby or small dog.

Sleeves with this Augmentation are Size -1 and suffer a -1 penalty to the WR of all unarmed or melee weapon attacks. However, you gain a +1 bonus on all Stealth tests and Athletics-based defense tests.

In addition, the augmented sleeve gains the *Tiny* Aspect.

OFF-THE-RACK SLEEVES

This section describes a number of different types of pre-generated sleeves. These sleeves are available in most resleeving facilities, or can be ordered for quick delivery.

It takes about three weeks to customize a biosleeve from scratch, but a cybersleeve can be produced in less than a week.

[Versa-Link Log: 14:25-06,14,98]

[Micah] – I did it! I got my new sleeve. Oh man, what a trip!

[Tess] – Wow. What'd you get?

[Micah] – I got the VitaCon Series 3 Raphael

[Tess] – That's kinda like a cheaper version of the Satyr right?

[Micah] – Yup. It's going to take me a while to get used to it. Even though I'm a lot stronger now, I'm really clumsy. Keep bumping into things. ☺

[Tess] – That's so strange. I can't imagine what it must feel like to see another face in the mirror.

[Micah] – I'm not going to lie. I ‘ve been freaking out off and on since I got it. It's hard to sleep. I can't stop *feeling* myself.

[Tess] – eww

[Micah] – You know what I mean. I'm just very aware of how my clothes feel. How the bed feels. That sort of thing.

[Tess] – It's going to weird seeing you again. Do people treat you differently?

[Micah] – A little. Mom cried when she saw me. I think she still worries that I'm not really me.

[Tess] – Yeah, she called me the night before. She tried to get me to try to stop you. I told her I couldn't.

[Micah] – She doesn't understand.

Courier

Beta Cybersleeve [Restricted] **Cost:** 6 **Manufacturer:** Black Market Sources

The Courier cybersleeve was designed for smuggling, featuring a number of augmentations designed to contain and hide small items.

The Courier typically cannot be legally obtained, but can be acquired from numerous black market sources.

Its bio-skin sheath makes the Courier appear to be a standard low-quality biosleeve. It is made of inorganic components, some of which are made of materials specifically selected and arranged to disrupt and confuse prying sensor systems. As a result, items carried by a Courier are harder to pick out via sensor tech. It also has a hidden compartment outfitted with a charlatan module.

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance*

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 2, Perception 2

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Data Jack and Storage (Secure), Bio-Skin Sheath, Custom Built (Resistant to Sensor Tech), Smuggler's Compartment (Charlatan);

Armor Rating: +1

Ingot

Alpha Biosleeve **Cost**: 6 **Manufacturer:** Extant Worlds (Dalianis)

The Ingot biosleeve from Extant Worlds was devised specifically for tight corridors and high gravity worlds.

The Ingot is short, averaging around 1.5 meters tall and weighing in at around 100 kg. Its bones are especially dense, with a body covered in thick slabs of muscle.

While originally designed for operations involving high-gravity work, the Ingot is popular among miners in most any location. It also performs exceedingly well in most heavy labor fields. This makes them popular with House Tsarya, who often makes them available to apostates working to earn House membership.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Unattractive*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 5, Perception 1

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Performance Enhanced (+1 Endurance)

Strife

Beta Biosleeve **Cost:** 7 **Manufacturer:** Gladius Industries (Tsarya)

It cannot be denied that the Strife biosleeve was designed for anything but combat.

Capable of forcing an injection of adrenaline on command, and outfitted with a skin-woven armor mesh, the Gladius Industries Strife is capable of both dealing punishment and taking it.

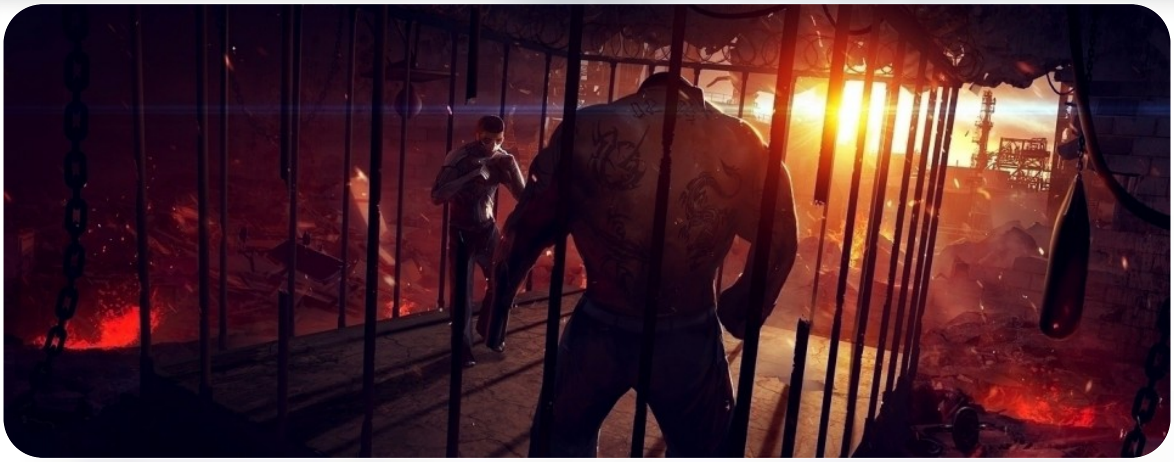
House Tsarya provides Strife sleeves to many of the other Houses in trade, and sells them on the open market to Coalition Centurions and Legionnaires.

They're also popular with less reputable types, such as bounty hunters, pirates, gangsters, and the like.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Adrenal Boost Module, Built for War*

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 3, Perception 2

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Adrenal Boost Module, Skinweave Armor (AR +1), Custom Built (*Built for War*)



Ursus

Beta Biosleeve **Cost:** 7 **Manufacturer:** Avalon Systems (Silva)

Large, powerful, hairy, and bestial: all of these words accurately describe Avalon System's Brute-Series Ursus biosleeve. Popular among street toughs, bouncers, and pit fighters, the Ursus is the result of a number of successful gene splices taken from the Alaskan grizzly bear.

While still (barely) within the parameters set forth by the HPA, the Ursus features a large powerful frame, sharp canines set into a short muzzle, and a genetic predisposition toward aggression and ferocity.

While it doesn't have a bear's thick coat of fur, it certainly sports more body hair than is the human norm.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Bear's Temper and Ferocity, Ursine Frame and Features, Particle Detection and Analysis Module*

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 4, Perception 1

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Physiological Behavior Mods (Bear's Temper and Ferocity), Cosmetic Customization (Ursine Frame and Features), Particle Detection and Analysis Suite

Jinsoku

Gamma Cybersleeve **Cost:** 8 **Manufacturer:** Lotus Cyberworks (Kimura)

A favorite of Lotus' Kage line, the Jinsoku cybersleeve was designed for recon and stealth. The joints are enhanced with shock-absorbing compression pads, while the cutting edge Tango RX7 balance sensitivity module allows for unmatched grace.

The outer skin is a matte black composite, wrapping a soundproofed skeleton.

The Jinsoku is a favorite among thieves, spies, snipers, and anyone who needs to get in and out of a location without being detected.

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Auditory Amp & Filtering Module(P), Beholder Sensory Suite(P), Retinal Implant, Stealth Mods*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 2, Perception 4

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Bio-Skin Sheath, Fully Synthetic, Auditory Amp & Filtering Module, Beholder Sensory Suite, Custom Built (Stealth Mods), Retinal Implant (Retinal Implant)

Armor Rating: +2

Vixen/Satyr

Gamma Biosleeve **Cost:** 9 **Manufacturer:** Luna Illuminated (Silva)

The Vixen and Satyr sleeves, female and male, are design for sex appeal. They are favorites among entertainers, sensie stars, and a great number of politicians.

Moreover, the Vixen or Satyr sleeve's appearance is not a generic sort of beauty. These sleeves are pulled from production because they have some exotic feature that makes them stand out from the rest. They are then further augmented and sold at a premium.

Not only do they turn heads, but they are also outfitted with pheromone detection capabilities that aid the wearer in their interactions with others.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Absolutely Stunning(P),* Players Choice of Aspect from Cosmetic Customization

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 3, Perception 3

Augmentations: Apotheosis (Remote Backup), Striking Looks (Absolutely Stunning), Cosmetic Customization (Player Choice of Aspect), Pheromone Control & Sensitivity

Justicar

Gamma Biosleeve [Restricted] **Cost:** 9 **Manufacturer:** Helical Rings (Silva)

The Justicar sleeve was specially designed by Helical Rings to be the premiere sleeve for Centurion investigators and undercover agents.

The Justicar features both offensive and defensive augmentations, as well as enhanced awareness to aid in detecting criminal activity.

While most sleeves of the same type tend to strongly resemble each other, the development contract for the Justicar stipulated a wider range of randomization, leading to a more individualized appearance. This feature makes it more difficult to spot Justicars—a boon when it comes to undercover work.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Forgettable Appearance*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 3, Perception 4

Augmentations: Apotheosis (Remote Back-up), Cosmetic Customization (*Forgettable Appearance*), Targeting Support System, Skinweave Armor

Paragon

Epsilon Biosleeve **Cost:** 14 **Manufacturer:** Luna Illuminated (Silva)

It is believed by many transhumans that the Apotheosis and Synthesis procedures promote biological sleeves to the pinnacle of human evolution. This sleeve model was purpose-built to grant the wearer unparalleled physical performance and survivability in a biological/synthetic hybrid frame.

The Paragon sleeve, Luna Illuminated's crowning achievement, is marketed as one short step away from divinity. The Paragon is very popular among high-Rep transhumans, and is worn by the majority of transhuman celebrities.

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Striking Looks, Synthesized Biological Perfection,*

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 4, Perception 4

Augmentations: Apotheosis (Remote Backup), Emergency Life Support System, Medichine Factory, Striking Looks, Skinweave Armor, Synthesis

[Monitor Observation: 984836204; 6:45:35-04,21,97; Section C04; 52-27-DB]

[Violent Activity Detected] – Discharge of Restricted Weapons with Intent to Harm

[Visual and Auditory Analysis Commencing]

Suspect - Citizen ID: RJ38N39D

Suspect - Citizen ID: PD94C79Y

Suspect - Citizen ID: PJ53JR12V

[CENTURIAN DISPATCHED]

[ACTIVITY LOG IN PROGRESS]

Three shots fired by Citizen ID: PD94C79Y at Citizen ID: RJ38N39D. Shots missed target, impacted south-east wall. Injury report: None

Citizen ID: RJ38N39D deployed unknown nanotechnological swarm weapon. Swarm composition matches standard RX-9 Wendigo esper swarm. <Subjective Observation: Swarm utilized in restricted manner. No Queen ID present. Appearances indicate swarm under direct control of Citizen ID: RJ38N39D.> Swarm used to stab Citizen ID: PD94C79Y six times. Injury Report: Victim Killed

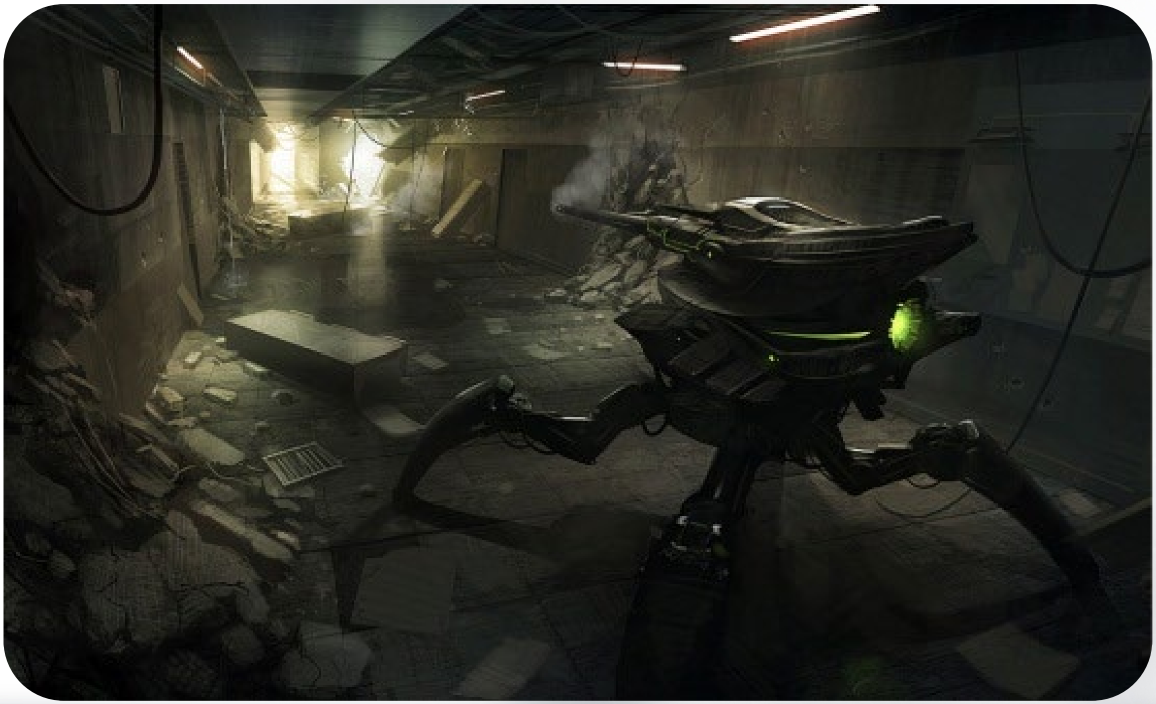
Citizen ID: PD94C79Y --DECEASED--

Two shots fired by Citizen ID: PJ53JR12V at Citizen ID: RJ38N39D. One shot hit. Injury Report: Citizen ID: RJ38N39D injured. Non-critical.

Citizen ID: RJ38N39D directed swarm weapon to attack Citizen ID: PJ53JR12V. Swarm directed to dissolve Citizen ID: PJ53JR12V. Injury Report: Victim Killed

Citizen ID: PD94C79Y --DECEASED--

ADVISORY: All available units dispatched to apprehend Citizen ID: RJ38N39D. <Use caution. Suspect is to be considered armed and extremely dangerous. Appears to be a Savant.>



DRONES

Drones are a common sight in most Coalition cities and habitats, and can be found in many apostate enclaves as well. They usually carry out tasks via a complex narrow AI, but can be controlled by remote as well.

Drones are used to perform hazardous jobs such as mining, search and rescue, or exploration. They are also used for security, with the Lonestar drone working hand in hand with Centurion forces.

Drones are also common on the battlefield. In fact, most military operations are carried out entirely by drones. However, lag can sometimes be an issue, resulting in the same kind of penalties SIMs suffer (pg. 156) when operating over great distances.

This chapter focuses on humanoid, or at least relatively human-sized, drones. These types of drones are generally used to do jobs too dangerous for direct human action.

Other types of drones can exist as well. Much like the drones listed here, starships, warframes, and other types of vehicles can be outfitted with an AI or operated by remote.

Controlling a Drone

Passive Control: Drones feature narrow AIs capable of fulfilling most simple commands to the best of their ability (which is measured by their Skills).

Issuing a command to a drone is a Free Action.

Active Control: As a Simple Action, you can directly control the drone by remote using a neural link or mindset. Under your control, the drone gains a +1 bonus on its Skill tests.

If you are using the Puppeteer Savant Program to possess the drone, this bonus is increased to +2.

Creating a Drone

Your character, especially if he is a SIM, may want to own a drone. They can be used for security, direct assault, recon—the possibilities are endless.

Drones are built in the same way sleeves are. In fact, purchasing a drone is almost exactly the same as purchasing a cybersleeve. There are a few differences, however:

- Drones gain two Aspects (in addition to *Synthetic Biology* and *Inhuman Appearance*) that define what they are, and/or what they are used for.
- The drone cannot support a hostware suite.
- The Cost of a drone is 1 rank less than a comparable sleeve.
- Drones with restricted Augmentations are themselves restricted and cannot legally be owned without a license.
- Drones get a number of ranks to spread among their Skills equal to twice the number of Physical Skill Ranks a comparable cybersleeve gets. A drone may put ranks in the standard Physical Skills, as well as Demolitions, Insight, Firearms, Melee, Pilot, Resolve, Stealth and Strategy. A drone may never have more than 5 ranks in a single Skill.
- Drones can come with their own weapons and armor, making them restricted. They can have a number of weapons equal to their Strategy rating. No weapon may cost more than the drone's Strategy +2. Instead of the armor bonus all cybersleeves get, the drone has an armor bonus equal to its Endurance +1.

Note that if you have the Drone Jock Stunt (pg. 169), the drone's Cost is reduced by -1, two of its Skills (your choice) increase by 1 rank, and it gets 1 more Augmentation Point.

Drones do not normally have Fate Points, but their user can spend their Fate Points to invoke his drone's Aspects. The Optimized Power System Augmentation (pg. 220) can also allow for additional Aspect invocations.

Drone Specific Augmentations

Very Tiny Size (AV 0): Like Tiny Size, but the drone's size is reduced by -2. It gains +2 on Athletics-based defense rolls, -1 Endurance, +1 Stealth.

Armored (AV 2): The drone's natural armor is increased by +3. The drone may not take this aug more than once. This aug does not stack with Skinweave armor.

Armed (AV 2): The drone may have a single weapon with a Cost equal to its own Cost. Or, it may carry two additional weapons. The drone may not take this Augmentation more than once.

Imex V44 Case Spider

This relatively small drone folds up into what appears to be a small briefcase. When activated, it transforms into a spider-like drone designed for infiltration and surveillance.

When required to attack, it does so with either a small railgun that emerges from its back, or by latching onto a target and stabbing it with a piercing spike that ejects from its abdomen.

Beta Drone **Cost:** 5 [Restricted]

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Cyberspider Drone, Quality Visual Sensors*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 1, Perception 3

Other Skills: Firearms 1, Melee 1, Resolve 2, Stealth 3, Strategy 2

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Custom Built (Suitcase Form, Stealth Enhancements), Alternative Mobility System (Wall-Crawling Spider Legs), Hidden Weapon System (Piercing Spike), Very Tiny Size (Size -2)

Armor Rating: +2 (+2 on Athletics based defense tests)

Weapons:	**Weapon Rating**	**Range**
Hvy Rail-Pistol	+4	2
Armor Penetrating, Small, Reduce WR by -2 for Silent		
Piercing Spike	+2	0
Small		

Aegis System S-11 Wasp

The wasp is generally used in personal defense, but also has some surveillance capabilities. It looks like a synthetic wasp, measuring a little less than a third of a meter in height and weighing in at about 1.5 kg. In place of a stinger, it sports a small PAc gun.

Typically, the wasp hovers near the user, acting as a small security guard. It can be programmed with a number of basic behavioral routines, and can be given orders via voice in addition to direct control with a neural link or mindset.

Alpha Drone **Cost:** 4 [Restricted]

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Cyberwasp Drone, Basic Physical Security Programming*

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Endurance 1, Perception 3

Other Skills: Firearms 2, Resolve 1, Stealth 3, Strategy 3

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Alternative Mobility System (Flight Capable, Wasp Wings), Very Tiny Size (Size -2)

Armor Rating: +2 (+2 on Athletics-based defense tests)

Weapons:	**Weapon Rating**	**Range**
Lt Pac Pistol	+4	5
Particle Accelerator, Small		

System Attacks Against Drone Controllers

A Savant Program can target either the drone itself or the controller, assuming there is one.

If the operator is simply controlling the drone via remote, the attacker can target him to trace and lock on to the signal linking the drone to the operator. The attacker can do this by using a Simple Action to make a SINC or Software Engineering test (Diff: 3).

This link is relatively weak, though, with significant security between the drone and its operator. The attacking Savant suffers a -2 penalty on his Program execution tests due to this weak link.

If the operator is a Savant using the Puppeteer Program, his own systems are much more tightly linked to the drone. The attacker does not need to trace the signal or suffer the -2 penalty. A puppeteer has much better control over his drone, but he is also more vulnerable.

Black Gate Series III Cerberus Guardian

True to its name, the Cerberus drone resembles a large dog. Its purpose is to supplement security forces, or to patrol a designated area as autonomous security.

The Cerberus Guardian stands a meter high at the shoulder. Its synthetic musculature makes it look much like a large skinless dog with shiny black muscles. Its "skeleton" is usually gun-metal gray or chrome.

Gamma Drone **Cost:** 7 [Restricted]

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Canine-Inspired Drone, "The Series III Cerberus can run faster than most land craft."*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 2, Perception 2

Other Skills: Insight 1, Firearms 1, Melee 4, Resolve 2, Strategy 3

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Cosmetic Customization (Mono-sharp Fangs), Neura-Surge, Particle Detection and Analysis Suite, Skinweave Armor

Armor Rating: +6

Weapons:	**Weapon Rating**	**Range**
Bite Attack	+2	0

Ardent LS-7 "Lonestar" Armed Responder

This drone has a humanoid shape. It was designed to provide active security to locations that are either too inhospitable or too dangerous for living security forces, or to bolster their numbers.

The Lonestar is about 2 meters tall, features heavy armor plating, and has hands capable of using human weapons.

Gamma Drone **Cost:** 7 [Restricted]

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology(P), Inhuman Appearance, Built for Intimidation, Quality Visual Sensors, Corporate Sigil*

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Endurance 3, Perception 2

Other Skills: Insight 2, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Resolve 2, Strategy 3

Augmentations: Fully Synthetic, Cosmetic Customization (Corporate Sigil), Armed, Armored, Custom Built (Voice-Stress Analyzer)

Armor Rating: +7

Weapons:	**Weapon Rating**	**Range**
Hvy Coil Assault Rifle	+7	7

Full Auto, *Armor Penetrating, Huge(P)*

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VEHICLES

This chapter features rules for creating vehicles, from tanks to warframes, skiffs to carrier ships.

It also features rules for handling vehicular conflicts, which can range from vehicle vs. vehicle conflict to vehicle vs. personnel conflicts.

Steps of Vehicle Creation

1. What is the Vehicle?
2. Determine the Vehicle's Size.
3. Select three Vehicular Aspects.
4. Purchase the Vehicle's Capabilities.
5. Select three Specialty Aspects.
6. Purchase Vehicular Features.

Step #1: What is the Vehicle?

When designing a vehicle, the first question you must ask yourself is, "What is this thing for?"

If your vehicle is purely for transportation, it needs to be fast and agile. If it's for hauling cargo, it needs to be big and powerful, with plenty of storage area. If the vehicle is a weapon of war, it needs to be protected and must have the armament to get the job done.

Also, despite the use of the term vehicle, these rules can also be used to create immobile structures, from simple bunkers to space stations or impregnable fortresses.

Step #2: Size

Size plays an important part in designing a vehicle, determining factors such as its Base Cost, its Capabilities, and the number of modifications it can be equipped with (which take the form of Features).

In addition, a vehicle's Size is also a major factor in vehicular conflicts since bigger vehicles tend to have larger weapons, better electronic systems, more crew members, and thicker armor. A vehicle's Size should be added as a bonus any time its Size could give it an advantage, particularly in contests.

The vehicle has a number of Structural Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Structure + Modifiers. In addition, all vehicles automatically gain an Armor Rating equal to their Size.

The vehicle has a number of System Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Systems + Modifiers.

The vehicle has a number of Crew Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Crew + Modifiers.

Step #3: Vehicular Aspects

Like characters, vehicles are created with Aspects. These Aspects tend to answer the following questions:

1. What does it do?
2. Where did it come from?
3. How it is seen by the public?

Size	FP Refresh	Capabilities (Max 3)	Base Cost	Features	Sample Vehicles
1	2	7	10	4	Motorcycle, Lancer
2	2	8	12	5	Car, Skiff, Shuttle, Recon Frame
3	3	9	14	7	Cargo Shuttle, Tank, Assault Frame
4	3	10	16	9	Cruiser, Cargo Ship
5	4	11	18	12	Dreadnaught, Small Space Station
6	4	12	20	14	Carrier, Space Station

* The vehicle has a number of Structural Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Structure + Modifiers.

* The vehicle has a number of System Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Systems + Modifiers.

* The vehicle has a number of Crew Stress Boxes equal to its Size + Crew + Modifiers.

Sample Vehicle Aspects

Tramp Freighter

Massive Bipedal War Machine

Created in Secret by the Rebels

Designed for Recon and Surveillance

Often Associated with Having Poor Owners

Step #4: Capabilities

Vehicles have seven different Capabilities and a pool of ranks to distribute among them. The max rank a vehicle can have in a single Capability is 3.

The vehicle's Capabilities are added as a bonus to any Skill tests a character might need to perform to effectively operate the vehicle. For example, if the pilot needs to perform a test to weave through some space debris, he'd make a Pilot test and add the vehicle's Maneuverability rating as a bonus.

Note that if a vehicle has a crew, the vehicle's Crew Capability may be used instead of a character's Skill. In the above example, instead of the pilot character making a Pilot test and adding Maneuverability, you might instead use Crew + Maneuverability.

Crew is the most commonly used Capability that can also be used as a Skill, but some situations may call for others.

Crew – For vehicles with a crew, this Capability is the measure of their general competence. It is the bonus added to any action performed by NPC crew members. For NPC Vehicles, it may be used in place of a Skill.

Maneuverability – This measures how quickly the vehicle can turn, dodge, and perform high-speed maneuvers.

Structure – The amount of physical punishment the vehicle can take; a product of good engineering and/or armor.

Sensors – The eyes and ears of the machine, such as long-range detection and analysis sensor suites.

Speed – The measure of the vehicle's top speed.

Systems – The capabilities and amount of punishment the systems can take from electronic attacks, hacks, viruses, and the like.

Weapons – The potency of the vehicle's onboard weapons, such as guns, missiles, lasers, and so on.

Step #5: Specialty Aspects

Very similar to the Aspects a character can gain by taking the Specialty Aspect Stunt (pg. 175), Vehicles have Specialty Aspects that better define their Capabilities. These Aspects might represent some special system or modification, crew member, or just a natural product of the design.

Vehicles get three free Specialty Aspects when created.

Sample Specialty Aspects

Particle Acceleration Cannons (Weapons)

Advanced Counter-Intrusion Software (Systems)

High-Resolution Sensor Array (Sensors)

"What a Bucket of Bolts" (Structure)

Can Turn on a Dime (Maneuverability)

Fastest Ship in the Galaxy (Speed)

Dr. Elizabeth Halsted (Crew)

Step #6: Vehicular Features

Vehicles have traits called Features, which behave much like Stunts do for characters. The number of Features a vehicle gains during creation depends on its Size, but a vehicle can gain more Features by increasing its Cost.

For every +1 added to the vehicle's Cost, it gains 2 Features.

If purchased after vehicle creation, the Cost of a Feature is equal to the vehicle's total Cost minus its Size. For example, a new Feature for a Size 4 vehicle (Cost: 16) would have a Cost of 12 (16 – 4 = 12). The vehicle may never have more than half-again the amount of Features it starts with, rounded up.

Vehicle Features may grant bonuses to certain actions, access to special actions, or describe special equipment, weapons, defenses, and more.

The Features that vehicles can take tend to fall into the following categories:

Mobility – These Features define how the vehicle moves. Without a Mobility Feature, the "vehicle" is really just an immobile structure.

Functional/Offensive/Defensive – Ranging from the vehicle's power plant to its main guns, these Features cover benefits provided by feats of impressive engineering.

Crew – These Features represent specialists or elite crew members.

Stress and Consequences

Similar to a character, a vehicle has Stress Tracks that limit the amount of stress it can suffer before it becomes irreparably damaged.

Just like characters, vehicles may be treated like mooks and be limited in the number of Consequences they can suffer. See page 253 for more on mooks.

Structural Stress

Structural stress determines the amount of physical stress the vehicle can suffer before it simply fails. Structural stress is usually the result of collisions and weapons fire.

The number of Structural Stress Boxes a vehicle has is determined with the following formula:

Size + Structure Rating + Other Modifiers = Structural Stress Boxes

Vehicles automatically get an Armor Rating equal to their Size.

System Stress

System stress determines the amount of stress the vehicle can suffer to its electronic systems or delicate internal workings. System stress is usually the result of cyber-warfare, and represents damage to both software and delicate hardware. A Cyber-Warfare Suite (pg. 248) is required to make system attacks.

The number of System Stress Boxes a vehicle has is determined by the following formula:

Size + Systems Rating + Other Modifiers = System Stress Boxes

Crew Stress

While only found on vehicles that actually have an active crew, such as a starship, the Crew Stress Track determines the amount of stress the members of the crew have suffered.

Generally, Crew Consequences represent members of the crew who have been hurt or disabled for some reason, and are unable to perform their duties.

If the vehicle does not have a Crew Capability rating of at least 1, it will not have a Crew Stress Track.

The number of Crew Stress Boxes a vehicle has is determined by the following formula:

Size + Crew Rating + Other Modifiers = Crew Stress Boxes

Who Plays the Ship?

Usually the character responsible for each particular task declares the actions that the vehicle takes as they relate to his task.

For example, the player of a ship's pilot would declare the vehicle's movement actions and make the associated tests; the character responsible for manning the guns would pick the targets and make attack tests; the character in charge of system attacks would make those tests, and so forth.

When in doubt, put the player of the pilot/driver in charge. His character probably has some Aspect or Stunt related to piloting or driving, which is a good indicator that he might enjoy the opportunity more than the other players.

Repairing Consequences

Unlike living beings, machines do not fix themselves; they require the time and money of people willing to repair them.

Like a character, stress boxes clear at the end of the scene. It is assumed that the owners provide the necessary routine maintenance to take care of such minor damage.

Having access to the proper facilities can make repairing a vehicle much easier by invoking the facility's Aspects. See page 236X for more on making repairs to broken items and vehicles.

When recovering Consequences on your Crew Stress Track, the rules are the same as repairing, but you use Diplomacy instead. Rather than repairing damage and buying parts, you requisition or hire new crewmen to replace those you've lost.

Doing Things in Vehicles

Actions

The number of actions that the vehicle can perform in a round can vary, and depends on a few factors.

Each PC can perform a Simple Action, and the crew can perform a number of Simple Actions equal to the vehicle's Size. However, the passengers and crew may be limited based on what the vehicle is actually capable of.

Like a character, in addition to Simple Actions, the vehicle may also take Free Actions and Instant Actions.

On the vehicle's turn, it may perform any of these actions as a Simple Action so long as there is a character (PC or NPC) to guide that operation and the requirements are met:

Vehicular Weapon Attack – An attack using onboard weapons. Requires a Weapon Rating of at least 1 and a Weapon Feature.

Vehicular System Attack – An attack made against an enemy vehicle's computer systems. Requires a Systems rating of at least 1 and the Cyber-Warfare Suite Feature.

Vehicular Crew Attack – An attack made by the people onboard the vehicle. Requires a Crew rating of at least 1 and the crew must be able to get to the other vehicle's crew, usually by boarding (pg. 239).

Vehicular Maneuver – An action by a PC, an NPC, or the crew that uses some part of the vehicle to place an Aspect.

Personal Action – Characters onboard the vehicle can take normal actions, such as communicate with other characters, perform research, or even engage in conflicts.

Driving/Piloting

Getting from Point A to Point B generally doesn't require any Skill tests. However, the pilot or driver will sometimes be called upon to dodge obstacles, leap ravines, or pull off other feats of fancy wheel/stick work.

In those cases, the person controlling the movement of the vehicle performs a Pilot Skill test. (Even if the vehicle is a ground vehicle, and the character is technically "driving," you still use the Pilot Skill).

The vehicle's Capabilities, usually either Maneuverability or Speed, will be added as a bonus to this test.

The People Matter

The vehicle can also call upon any relevant Features and Aspects of the characters within or in its crew, using its own Fate Points if needed.

For example, if a character has the Aspect *Hot Shot Pilot*, when it comes time to make a test related to piloting the vehicle, either the pilot may spend a Fate Point to invoke his Aspect for a bonus, or a character may spend one of the vehicle's Fate Points to invoke the pilot's Aspect.

Vehicular Maneuvers

Movies and fiction are rife with little tricks that characters play with their vehicles to give themselves an edge. Most of these tricks can be resolved as Maneuvers.

For example, a Piloting/Maneuverability test might be made to place Aspects like *Drifting Around the Corners* or *"I'm on his six!"* on your vehicle, invoking them for bonuses during chases or when making weapon attacks. In another case, you might perform a Hardware Engineering/Systems test to place *All Power to Forward Guns* on your ship to give its attack a little boost.

Maneuvers are a great way to handle the techno-babble found in a lot of science fiction. Little tricks like changing the frequency of a data burst or "slingshotting" around a planet for an increase in speed are good ways to get the critical advantage you need in a fight.

Vehicles and Zones

Normally a zone is defined by its most obvious borders. At the scale characters normally deal with, zones are usually rooms, hallways, stairwells, a thicket of trees, and so on.

At the vehicular scale, a zone might be a city block, a street, an entire building, a lake, or something of similar size. If there are good natural or territorial boundaries you can use to define the vehicular-scale zones, you may want to use them. If not, such as with a conflict that takes place in an open desert, you may want to break the map down on a grid.

The zones should be sized and arranged depending on the types of vehicles involved. Dreadnaught starships can certainly move more quickly than skiffs, and need more room to maneuver.

It may also be necessary to break a vehicular-scale zone down into multiple smaller zones if the action switches to conflicts featuring individual characters.

Vehicular Conflict

Stealth and Detection

If the vehicle has onboard sensor equipment, the sensor operator's Perception Skill can be used to detect the presence of other vehicles and gather additional data.

Generally this test is against a difficulty of 0, with +1 added to the difficulty for every zone between the detecting vehicle and the hidden vehicle. Certain Features possessed by hidden vehicles may increase the test difficulty.

The vehicle's Sensors Capability is added as a bonus to this roll. If the vehicle is an NPC vehicle, it uses its combined Crew and Sensor Capabilities instead of a specific character's Perception Skill.

Structural Attacks

Railguns, missiles, torpedoes, particle accelerators: these are types of weapons used by vehicles to make structural attacks.

A vehicle may make a structural attack as a Simple Action. These attacks are made using the Firearms or Demolitions Skill (whichever is highest) of the character in control of the vehicle's weapons, with the vehicle's Size and Weapons Capability rating added as a bonus. The attack has a Weapon Rating defined by the Feature that granted the weapon.

The defender can defend by maneuvering to dodge out of the way (Pilot or Crew + Maneuverability), using the vehicle's armor to harmlessly absorb the damage (Hardware Engineering or Crew + Structure), activating electronic defenses to disrupt weapon targeting and guidance systems (Software Engineering or Crew + Systems), and so on.

Remember that all Vehicles automatically get an Armor rating equal to their Size.

Ramming

Instead of using onboard weapons, there is always the option of simply ramming into your target. The attack is made as a Piloting test, adding the vehicle's Speed and the attacking vehicle's Size as bonuses.

The defender may choose to defend with his Piloting Skill plus either Maneuverability or Structure, also adding the defending vehicle's Size as a bonus.

If the attacker hits, the defender suffers stress as the two vehicles have collided.

However, upon collision, both participants suffer a second attack (no Skill is used) with a bonus equal to twice the amount of stress the defender suffered in the original exchange. This second attack leads to the defender taking a second wave of stress, but the attacker could be damaged as well. Both vehicles may roll their engineer's Hardware Engineering (or Crew) plus the vehicle's Structure to defend.

System Attacks

System attacks are performed by assaulting another vehicle's computer systems with your own, by uploading viruses, overloading them with data, and more. These attacks and defensive measures employ a variation of the same technology used to create CISTs.

A system attack requires a Simple Action.

To make these sorts of attacks you must have the Cyber-Warfare Suite Feature and have someone to operate it, be it a PC, NPC, the ship's crew, or an AI.

A system attack requires the ability to interface with the opponent's computer systems, which is usually done via wireless trans-mission.

The attack roll uses the attacking vehicle's Software Engineering Skill + Systems Capability + Size. The system attack attempts to bypass your target's defenses and do as much damage as possible before your window of opportunity closes.

Such attacks can disrupt enemy communications, weapon systems, environmental controls, and more; this is reflected as stress dealt to the vehicle's System Stress Track.

System attacks are also defended against with the defending vehicles' Software Engineering + Systems Capability + Size. This represents the effectiveness of the vehicle's firewalls, anti-intrusion measures, and active electronic defenses.

In addition to causing system stress, you may also use your Cyber-Warfare Suite and Systems Capability to perform Maneuvers. For example, you might make a contested Software Engineering + Systems test to place a *Disabled Gravity Field* Aspect on the enemy vehicle.

Personnel/Crew Attacks

Any time a vehicle suffers a Structural Stress Consequence, there is a chance someone onboard could be injured as well.

The attacking vehicle makes an attack roll against each of the PCs and/or named NPCs inside. The attack roll is a simple dice roll with a bonus equal to the amount of stress suffered by the vehicle (before being reduced by taking a Consequence) on the attack that caused the Consequence.

The passengers can defend with whichever Skill seems most appropriate, most likely Endurance.

If the vehicle has the Crew Capability, it also suffers the same attack against its Crew Stress Track. The vehicle may defend against this attack with its Structure Capability.

Boarding

There are two ways to handle boarding. The first is to run it as a normal conflict scene between characters. As the vehicles come into contact with each other, shift focus away from the vehicles and to the individual characters. Divide the ships into zones, if necessary, and play the scene out like most any other conflict scene.

The second way is more abstract. First, the vehicles must be in the same zone. Once in the same zone, the attacking vehicle attempts to close with the defending vehicle by creating a Block using its Pilot/Crew + Maneuverability. If the defending vehicle overcomes the block, it is able to escape boarding range and leaves the zone.

As long as the two vehicles are in the same zone, the two can exchange attacks using their Crew + Size to attack and defend.

Individuals vs. Vehicles

Generally, rules aren't needed when individual characters come under fire by vehicles. The main gun of a four-story warframe can usually just be ruled as instant death by vaporization.

You may want something a bit more detailed and specific at times, though. In these cases, you can use the following rules:

When dealing with vehicles at the character-scale, an attack from the vehicle affects everything and everyone in the target's zone plus a number of additional zones equal to the vehicle's Size. A tank's cannon, a jet's strafing machine guns, or a starship's rail-cannons aren't generally accurate enough to attack a specific person, but instead will attack everyone in the area.

When attacking a zone of personnel, roll the vehicle's attack test as normal, but apply it to everyone in the zone. The GM might decide to change the attack's Weapon Rating into an Explosive Rating instead.

Vehicles with the Anti-Personnel Weapons Feature may elect to attack specific targets instead of attacking the entire zone.

When an individual attempts to attack a vehicle, he usually isn't going to have much of an effect. Even coil assault rifles have no effect on armored vehicles such as tanks or troop transports.

Weapons with the *Anti-Vehicular* Aspect might be invoked to inflict structural stress on a vehicle, but even that might not affect larger vehicles much. When attacking with such a weapon, resolve the attack normally. However, the vehicle gains a bonus to its Armor Rating equal its Size x3.

Sample Vehicular Features

Crew Features

Crack Shot

The vehicle's crew sports a master of the vehicle's weapon systems—a crack shot. The vehicle's Crew rating is considered 1 rank higher when attacking with its weapons.

Cyber-Warfare Specialist

The crew features a computer security specialist trained to infiltrate the computer systems of enemy vehicles. The vehicle's Crew rating is considered 1 rank higher when making system attacks. This Feature requires a Cyber-Warfare Suite.

Sensor Ranges

Generally, if you are mapping out an area in zones, any vehicle within the mapped area will be in sensor range. On the ground, sensors can reach for kilometers. In the air, they can reach even farther. In space, sensors can detect objects hundreds or even thousands of kilometers away.

Depending on the situation, the GM may set penalties for Sensor rolls at great ranges. See the table below for suggestions:

	Close (-0)	Medium (-1)	Long (-3)
Land	1 km	10 km	50 km
Air	10 km	50 km	100 km
Space	100 km	500 km	5000 km

Engineering Elite

There are one or more crewmen in engineering that can work magic with the vehicle's systems. The vehicle gains a +1 bonus when using its Crew Capability to perform Maneuvers related to the performance and reliability of the vehicle's power source, weapons, defenses, sensors, and so on.

Hotshot Driver/Pilot

The vehicle's primary driver or pilot is especially gifted. This member of the crew grants a +1 bonus whenever the vehicle's Crew Capability is used during a chase, to negotiate a difficult environment, or to perform a movement-related Maneuver.

Marines

The vehicle houses a number of trained warriors. These members of the crew provide a +2 bonus on any attack or defense roll made using Crew Capability.

Navigations Specialists

The crew features one or more navigators that perform at an exceptional level. These members of the crew provide a +2 bonus on any test made using the vehicle's Crew

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Capability to stay on course while traveling, or to determine your location.

In addition, when you roll to determine your position after exiting a jump gate (pg. 73), you may reroll once if you don't like the result, keeping the better of the two results.

Rapid Repair Team

Onboard the vehicle is a team of engineers that can quickly and accurately assess and repair damage to the vehicle's structure. These members of the crew provide a +1 bonus on defense tests using the Structure Capability, as well as provide a +2 bonus on tests to make repairs to the vehicle.

Trained Medical Staff

There are trained medical professionals among the crew. These crew members provide a +2 bonus on tests to recover Crew Consequences.

Defensive Features

Armored

The vehicle is covered in a layer of armor, providing an Armor Rating of 2. This Feature may be taken up to a number of times equal to the vehicle's Size -2. Each time the Feature is taken, the vehicle's AR is increased by an additional +2.

Electronic Counter Measures

The vehicle has been outfitted with some of the best firewalls and anti-intrusion Agents on the market. The vehicle gains a +2 bonus on tests to defend against electronic system attacks. You may take this Feature up to a number of times equal to your Systems Capability, each time adding +2 to your systems defense test.

Internal Defense Systems

The interior of the vehicle is designed to help repel boarders or even actively attack them. Examples of these systems include alcoves for cover, automated guns, sentry drones, and so on.

The vehicle gains a +2 bonus on Crew tests to defend against boarders.

Point Defense System

The vehicle has several precision weapons designed specifically to ward off small attackers or incoming missiles.

When defending against attacks from missiles, the vehicle gains a bonus to its AR equal to its Weapons Capability.

In addition, the vehicle may spend a Fate Point to attack every enemy in the same zone it occupies with its Point Defense System. This is resolved as a standard attack roll using only the attacking character's Firearms + vehicle's Weapons Capability. This attack has a Weapon Rating of 0.

Reactive Armor

The vehicle's armor is covered in a layer of explosives. These explosives are designed to detonate upon sustaining an impact from an enemy's kinetic weapons, absorbing and redirecting the bulk of the energy away from the vehicle.

Once per scene, you may increase your vehicle's AR by +4 against a single attack. This cannot be used against PAc weapons.

You may use this Feature more than once per scene, but each additional use requires the expenditure of a Fate Point.

Reflective Armor

The vehicle is covered in a thin layer of highly reflective material, which aids in reflecting and dispersing attacks from beam weapons.

The vehicle's Armor Rating is increased by +2 when defending against beam weapons.

Reinforced Structure

The vehicle's structure is fortified with redundant supports and high-quality materials. Increase the number of Structural Stress Boxes the vehicle has by +2. The vehicle may take this Feature a number of times equal to its Structure, each time adding two additional stress boxes.

Reinforced Undercarriage

The lower section of the vehicle has been hardened against explosions from below, such as from mines or any type of explosion detonated as the vehicle passes over it.

Against such attacks, the vehicle's Armor Rating is increased by +2.

Functional Features

Artificial Intelligence

The vehicle's electronic systems house a particularly useful artificial intelligence capable of performing any and all system-related tasks. This AI provides a +2 bonus on any Crew tests that make use of the vehicle's Systems or Sensors Capabilities.

It may also act as an Agent for characters who do not otherwise have one, adding a +1 bonus on Research, Education, or Engineering tests.

Auto-Repair Swarm

The vehicle is outfitted with esper swarm systems capable of automatically making repairs, even while the vehicle is in use.

Any tests to repair the vehicle gain a +2 bonus. If left alone, the vehicle will attempt to make repair rolls on itself using its Systems Capability. When self-repairing, the vehicle does not benefit from this Feature's +2 bonus.

Cargo Hold

The vehicle is outfitted with a hold and the equipment necessary for securing and moving cargo.

A vehicle can usually carry two items of a Size category one smaller than itself. For example, a Size 4 vehicle could generally carry two Size 3 items or four Size 2 items.

A vehicle that also has the Carrier Feature is considered to be one Size smaller, both for determining what kinds of vehicles it can carry and how much cargo it can hold.

The Cost of any vehicle with the Cargo Hold Feature is reduced by 1. A vehicle with the Cargo Hold Feature does not start with any cargo, which must be purchased separately.

Carrier

The vehicle contains an area large enough to house other smaller vehicles, move them around, and prep them for launch. It also includes an area set aside to perform maintenance on the vehicles.

A vehicle with this Feature can usually carry two vehicles of a Size category one smaller than itself. For example, a Size 4 vehicle can generally carry two Size 3 or four Size 2 vehicles.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature up to three times, each time increasing its own Size for the purposes of determining the number of vehicles it can carry. However, it may never carry any vehicles of a Size equal to or greater than its own true Size.

A vehicle that also has the Cargo Hold Feature is considered one Size smaller for determining both what vehicles it can carry and how much cargo it can hold.

The Cost of any vehicle with the Carrier Feature is reduced by 1. The Cost of the vehicle with the Carrier Feature does not include the carried vehicles, which must be purchased separately.

Cloaked

The vehicle is covered with material that absorbs radar, emits some sort of sensor disruption field, stores its own emissions, or otherwise masks itself from detection.

While still visible to the naked eye, the vehicle is much harder to detect with sensors. The difficulty to detect a cloaked vehicle is 4. See page 240 for more on sensors and detection.

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Crew Quarters

The vehicle is outfitted with the equipment and supplies needed for the crew to live within the vehicle for two weeks without resupplying.

Enhanced Crew Safety Systems

The vast array of safety equipment the crew has at their disposal helps ensure their safety. Any time the vehicle's passengers suffer an attack due to the vehicle suffering a Consequence from a Structural attack, they gain a +2 bonus on their defense test.

Enhanced Sensor Suite

A series of high-quality external sensors gives the vehicle a +2 bonus on rolls to gather information and detect other vehicles at range.

Escape Vehicles

Whether escape pods, an ejection seat, or a life raft, there are one or more small secondary vehicles stored onboard that are capable of taking at least some of the vehicle's passengers to safety in the event of a catastrophe.

If the vehicle is destroyed, each passenger may spend a Fate Point to Declare that they made it safely to an escape vehicle before the main vehicle exploded, imploded, sunk, or was otherwise destroyed.

Gate Crasher

The vehicle can send a series of signals that scramble and confuse another vehicle's navigation systems, preventing them from opening a jump gate.

The target must win in a contested Hardware Engineering + Systems roll to activate its jump drive.

Fated

The vehicle's Refresh is increased by +1.

Light Screen Camouflage

The vehicle can make itself almost invisible in almost all light spectrums, appearing only as a faintly visible ripple in the air.

The vehicle gains a +2 bonus on rolls to remain unnoticed by the naked eye or standard video equipment.

Linked Systems

Two vehicles with this Feature may remotely link their systems, allowing them to perform actions in unison much more efficiently.

Both vehicles must be within the same zone to link. While linked, both linked vehicles are considered one Size category larger than normal.

Mechanical Workshop

Within the vehicle you can find all the tools you need to fabricate and modify a vast array of objects and machines. The vehicle gains the *Workshop* Aspect, which can be invoked for a bonus on tests to build and repair things.

Med-Bay

A portion of the vehicle has been set aside as a recovery facility (pg. 123). It features all the necessary supplies to treat the wounded, perform surgery, and apply Augmentations.

Mesh System and Extranet Connectivity Suite

The vehicle sports its own internal mesh sensor system and can wirelessly connect to the Extranet. However, this requires at least one comm-buoy in the system, and there may be some lag depending on the vehicle's distance from it.

Mining Rig

The vehicle is outfitted with the necessary equipment to find and extract raw materials.

Mnemonics Lab & Resurrection Chamber

The vehicle features a resurrection chamber, and the necessary gear required to read mnemonic cores and make ego backups.

The vehicle also features a few storage pods in which sleeves can be stored.

Neural Interface

The vehicle is outfitted with hostware (pg. 205) and is capable of being controlled via a data jack, a VR interface device, or by a SIM. Commands can be delivered to the vehicle at the speed of thought, and the vehicle can provide a much deeper level of feedback to the user.

When performing any test with a vehicle while wearing a neural interface, you gain a +1 bonus.

Salvage Rig

The vehicle is outfitted with the necessary equipment to remove and handle salvageable items from wrecks and ruins.

Science Lab

There is a dedicated science lab within the vehicle. The vehicle gains the *Science Lab* Aspect, which can be invoked for a bonus on tests to analyze objects or perform experiments.

Signal Jammer

A series of signals can be sent to another vehicle, thereby distorting, scrambling, and redirecting attempts to establish communications with other vehicles.

The target must win in a contested Software Engineering + Systems roll to successfully send a communications signal.

Social Appeal

The vehicle appeals to the masses. Maybe it's some kind of status symbol or maybe it features some slick customizations that really draw the eye.

The vehicle gains the *Slick Ride* Aspect, which its owner might invoke for bonuses in some social situations.

Specialized

The vehicle gains an additional Specialty Aspect.

Stock Standard

The vehicle is off-the-shelf, no customizations, no special features, and is generally unremarkable. The vehicle's Cost is reduced by -1, and it gains the *Unremarkable* Aspect.

Target Designator

The vehicle is capable of "painting" targets for other allied vehicles or artillery systems. Painting is useful for communicating complex strategies, but also for guiding attacks made by other vehicles using indirect fire. See page 248 for more on indirect fire.

Tractor Beam

The vehicle can emit a beam of energy capable of locking onto a target and dragging it closer.

To use the tractor beam, the vehicle must first succeed on in a contest against its target. The vehicle using the tractor beam may test using its Size + Systems Capability, and the defending vehicle may use either its Size + Speed or Size + Maneuverability.

If the attacking vehicle wins, its target is held immobile until the next round. On its next turn, the attacker may initiate another contest. If it succeeds again, the target vehicle is pulled one zone closer. This contest is repeated each round until both vehicles are in the same zone or until the victim escapes.

Once both vehicles are in the same zone, they are close enough to attempt a boarding action. If the attacking vehicle has the Carrier Feature and has the necessary space, the defender is pulled into the attacker's vehicle.

At any time, if the attacker wins the contest and generates Spin, no additional contests are necessary. The defender is caught and can't resist being pulled in.

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If at any time the defender wins the contest, it breaks free and may move into an adjacent zone. The attacker may try again on his next turn, as long as the target is within range.

Upgraded

The vehicle has one additional rank to add to any of its Capabilities.

Mobility Features

Atmospheric Flight

The vehicle may fly about, as long as there's air to provide lift. Before taking this Feature, make sure one of its Aspects define how the vehicle flies, be it a fixed wing aircraft, a helicopter, or other craft. The average top speed of a vehicle with this Feature is around 500 kmph.

In addition to its ability to fly, this vehicle has the additional gear required to land, and may move about on the ground in a very limited fashion.

Jump Drive

The vehicle is equipped with the capability of traveling faster than the speed of light. This feat is accomplished by folding space and punching a hole through the resulting planes in parallel, such that the vehicle changes locations once the plane folding sequence has ended.

To the observer, it appears as if a large mirrored ball suddenly emerges from space, swelling from the size of a pinprick to a sphere large enough to encompass the vehicle. It will only stay open a split second before collapsing, shifting the vehicle's location as it does.

This same sphere, the jump gate, actually appears in two different locations at the same time. By passing into one, you emerge from the other.

Jump drives have some limitations, however:

Distance and Accuracy: The maximum distance that a jump gate can move an object is about two light-years.

You may attempt to jump farther by making a Hardware Engineering test (Diff: 2). Each Shift adds another light year.

If you fail, you do not jump and the ship suffers an amount of system stress equal to the amount by which you failed +3. It you Stall, the vehicle suffers the stress and jumps to a random location within five light years.

Even on a successful jump, precise placement is impossible. While the jump drive is capable of ensuring the vehicle does not arrive inside of a planet or star, you might arrive anywhere inside a target star system.

When you make a jump, roll the dice (if the result is negative, convert it to positive) and add +1. Multiply the result by 300 million. The final result is the number of kilometers between the vehicle's exit point and its target destination.

This lack of precision makes use of a jump drive inside a system nearly useless, or at best, random. Ships must rely on sub-light propulsion or jump rings instead.

Spooling Time: It requires some time to charge the jump drive and prepare the necessary calculations and navigational equipment to open a jump gate. This process typically takes about four hours.

Minimum Distance: A jump gate cannot be opened near an object that produces a significant gravity well. This interferes with calculations, making targeting the destination impossible. In these cases, the jump drive will simply refuse to open the gate.

As a rule of thumb, before a jump drive will work, the distance between the vehicle and any large celestial object (planet, asteroid, sun, etc.) must equal or exceed the diameter of the object x10.

For example, Earth has a diameter of almost 13,000 km. To open a jump gate near Earth, the vehicle must be a minimum of 130,000 km away.

Jump Gate Generator

Using jump gate technology, the vehicle is capable of creating a stable, sustained gate in space. Vehicles not equipped with jump drives may be piloted into the gate to achieve faster-than-light travel.

This gate is identical to the gate that a normal jump drive produces, but stays open longer and can be created without the creating ship automatically moving through it.

Ships with this capability are usually very large, each featuring a ring-like structure inside that houses the open gate. Once opened, the ring can be maintained for up to an hour, after which it expands briefly to encompass the ship that created it and collapses.

An open jump gate looks like a mirrored sphere that exists in two places at once. To use it, you need only pilot your craft into the sphere. Direction and speed are maintained; a ship that enters the top-right quadrant of one side of the gate at 100 kilometers per hour would exit from the adjoined location from the bottom left going the same speed.

Jump Jets

The vehicle is capable of making short leaps into the air. A vehicle with jump jets can leap as much as three times its own height into the air.

This grants a +2 on any rolls to Hustle or Run (pg. 125).

Tracked

Instead of wheels, this ground vehicle gets around on tracks. It gains the Aspect *Tracked*. The average top speed of a Vehicle with this Feature is around 50 kmph.

A tracked vehicle moves at the same rate as a wheeled vehicle (see below), but its *Tracked* Aspect may be compelled to force a penalty on rolls to Run.

Transitional

By itself, this Feature does nothing. When taken in conjunction with two other Mobility Features, this Feature allows the vehicle to switch between them with a Simple Action.

For example, a vehicle may take Transitional, Walker (Multi-Legged), and Atmospheric Flight to be able to transform between a spider-like warframe and a flying troop transport.

Two-Wheeled

With only two wheels, the vehicle is more agile but is also more unstable. It gains the *Two-Wheeled* Aspect. The average top speed of a Vehicle with this Feature is around 100 kmph.

A two-wheeled vehicle moves at the same rate as a wheeled vehicle (see below) in a vehicle-scale conflict.

Space Flight

The vehicle is capable of traversing the vacuum of space with sub-light drives. The average top speed of a vehicle with this Feature is around 600,000 kmph, though this speed takes up to an hour to achieve.

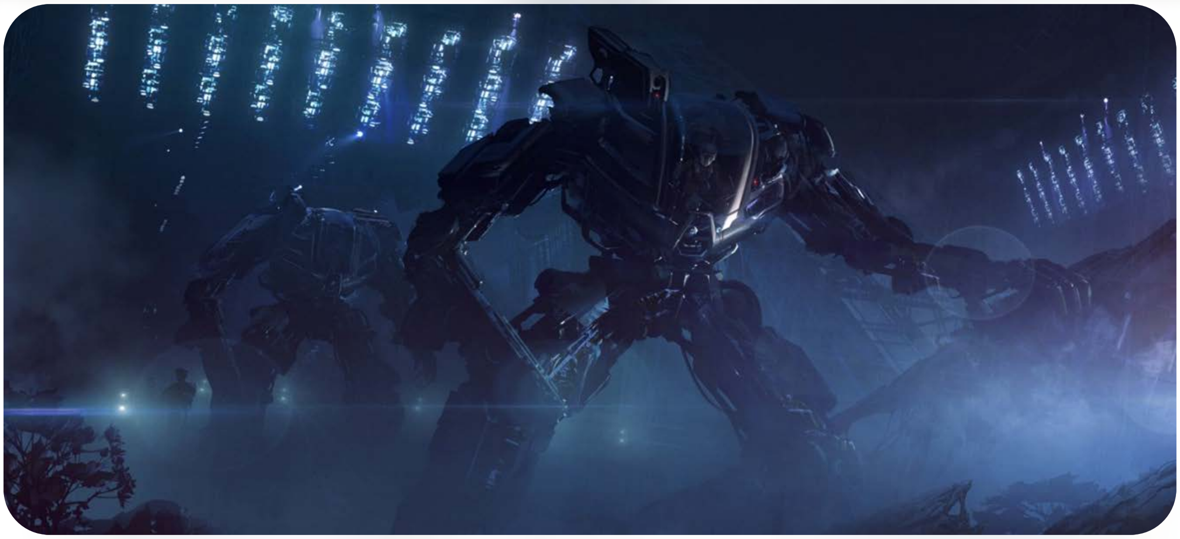
The speed limit in Coalition space within 500 km of an inhabited planet, moon, or habitat is 30,000 kmph. Within 10 km of a habitat, the vehicle's speed must be matched to the habitat's and may not vary by more than 100 kmph.

However, without also taking Atmospheric Flight, the vehicle will crash upon entering atmosphere.

In addition to its ability to fly in space, this vehicle has the additional gear required to dock with other vehicles or space stations.

Spacecraft tend to fall into one of the following types:

- Alpha Type “Corvette” (Size 2)
- Beta Type “Frigate” (Size 3)
- Gamma Type “Cruiser” (Size 4)
- Delta Type “Dreadnaught” (Size 5)
- Epsilon Type “Carrier” (Size 6)



VTOL

The vehicle is capable of vertical takeoff and landing. The vehicle may rise and hover in place, not requiring a runway or special launching pad to take to the air. Note that this Feature is virtually useless by itself. The vehicle will also need Atmospheric Flight.

Walker, Bipedal

Called warframes, vehicles with this Feature move around on a pair of legs similar to those of a human or a bird. The average top speed of a vehicle with this Feature is around 50 kmph.

The Vehicle gains the *Bipedal Walker* Aspect.

Warframes tend to range in height from three meters to as tall as ten meters. They are generally used as mobile artillery platforms, but also for recon on occasion.

Walker, Multi-legged

Instead of two legs, the warframe uses three or more legs to provide locomotion and greater stability. Six- or eight-legged bug or spider-like configurations are common. The vehicle gains the *Multi-legged (P)* Aspect.

Waterborne

The vehicle is capable of moving on the surface of water, but may also dive beneath the surface. It gains the *Submersed* Aspect when diving. The average top speed of a vehicle with this Feature is around 75 kmph.

Wheeled

The vehicle moves about on three or more wheels.

The average top speed of a Vehicle with this Feature is around 100 kmph.

Offensive Features

Anti-Personnel Weapons

The vehicle is outfitted with a weapon or weapons specifically designed to attack personnel instead of other vehicles. When making attacks with this weapon, the attacks are made and resolved as if they were fired by a human-sized individual character, meaning that the weapon attacks specific targets instead of entire zones.

Attacks are made using Firearms (or Crew) + the vehicle's Weapons Capability. The weapon has a Weapon Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +4.

If used against another vehicle, this weapon is treated as if it were fired from a man on foot.

Weapon Ranges

The Range of any weapon on a vehicle is equal to the vehicle's Weapons Capability. Thus, if the vehicle has a Weapon Rating of 2, the Range of all of its weapons is 2 zones. Just as with other weapons, attacks suffer a -1 penalty per zone beyond the weapon's Range.

System attacks are limited to sensor ranges. If the vehicle is within sensor range and has been detected, it is susceptible to a system attack.

Auto-Cannon

Though smaller than a standard cannon, the auto-cannon boasts a much higher rate of fire. When making an attack with the auto-cannon, roll Firearms (or Crew) + the vehicle's Weapons Capability. The auto-cannon has a Weapon Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +2.

In addition, the vehicle has the option to spend a Fate Point to attack every vehicle in a specified zone that it does not occupy with its auto-cannon. When doing this, make an attack against every enemy in the targeted zone, but reduce the attack's WR by 3. If the Auto-Cannon is part of a weapon battery, add +2 to the attack's WR.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time increasing the auto-cannon's Weapon Rating by another +2.

Boarding Capsules

The vehicle is capable of launching a craft dedicated to transporting boarders to another enemy vehicle.

When attempting a boarding action against a mobile vehicle, the boarding vehicle gains a +2 bonus on its attack tests.

Bomber

The vehicle is capable of dropping large bombs on the battlefield. When dropping a bomb, the vehicle makes an attack against all ground forces in the targeted zone using Demolitions (or Crew) + Weapons Capability. The bomb has an Explosive Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +3.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time increasing the bomb's Explosive Rating by +2. In addition, it may affect one additional zone adjacent to the targeted zone.

Cannon

The vehicle is outfitted with a large cannon that is capable of doing tremendous damage to other vehicles. When making an attack with this cannon, roll either Firearms or Demolitions (or Crew) + the vehicle's Weapons Capability. The cannon has a Weapon Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +4.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time increasing the cannon's Weapon Rating by +2.

Cyber-Warfare Suite (CWS)

The systems aboard the vehicle have been upgraded to feature CIST technology. The vehicle is capable of making electronic attacks against the systems of enemies within sensor range.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time gaining a +1 bonus on system attack rolls.

Indirect Fire Capability

The weapons used by the vehicle do not need a direct line of sight to their target. The weapons can be fired into the air, arcing to hit their target. However, this requires someone or something to provide the vehicle with the location of the target, such as a spotter capable of delivering coordinates or another vehicle with the Target Designator Feature.

When making indirect attacks, the vehicle suffers a -1 penalty on the attack roll. However, its weapon's Range is multiplied by five.

Melee Weapon

The vehicle, usually a warframe, is outfitted with a melee weapon attached to a limb

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capable of wielding it. The weapon could be a massive axe or sword, or maybe a giant saw. Regardless of its actual form, the vehicle can attack with it using Melee + Maneuverability, and the weapon has a Weapon Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +2.

The vehicle may only use its melee weapon to attack vehicles in the same zone.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time increasing the melee weapon's Weapon Rating by +2.

Mine Dispenser

The vehicle may deploy mines as it moves through a zone, placing the *Mined* Aspect on that zone. In addition, whenever a vehicle moves into the mined zone, it suffers an attack.

This attack is resolved as a simple dice roll with a +3 bonus. The mines have a Weapon Rating of +4.

Missile Bay

The vehicle is outfitted with a missile launcher and a number of missiles. The vehicle may fire a single large missile or torpedo, or a swarm of smaller missiles.

Once per scene, the vehicle may attack with its missiles. Additional attacks cost a Fate Point each. When making a missile attack, roll Firearms or Demolitions (or Crew) + the vehicle's Weapons Capability. The missiles home in on their target, granting a +2 bonus to the attack roll and adding +2 to the weapon's effective Range. The missiles have a Weapon Rating equal to the vehicle's Size +4.

The vehicle may purchase this Feature multiple times, each time increasing the missile's Weapon Rating by +2.

Reinforced Prow

The front of the vehicle is reinforced for ramming other vehicles. When initiating a ram, the vehicle gains a +2 bonus on both attack and defense tests.

[Tac-Comm v1.76.3/ Log: 07:36-04,21,97]

[Alexei] – The mesh wasn't as spotty as you thought it'd be Mal.

[Malpheus] – My apologies. But I was glad to hear that some of the locals were able to give you a ride.

[Alexei] – Yeah. Your minions came through.

[Reagan] – How bad is the situation?

[Alexei] – I had a burner CID on, so the meshed pinged it for the killings.

[Reagan] – It see your face?

[Alexei] – No. Helmet. Good thing to. I like this sleeve.

[Reagan] – Okay. We've done what we came here to do. Everyone get back to the ship. We're dusting off in 15 minutes. Anders?

[Anders] – I'm going with you. Jennie is in a safe place. You bastards really kicked the hornet's nest this time.

Weapon Battery

By itself, this Feature does nothing. You must also select the Cannon, Auto-Cannon, or Missile Bay Feature.

Instead of having a single weapon of that type, the vehicle has several. This allows the vehicle to spend a Fate Point to either focus all of its attacks on a single enemy or split its fire among all the enemies in a zone.

When attacking a single enemy with all the weapons in its battery, the vehicle gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and an additional +2 bonus to its Weapon Rating.

Alternatively, the vehicle can target a zone it does not occupy to make an attack against every enemy in that zone, which is resolved as a normal attack with that weapon against each target.

Silverpike

Size: 4 **Refresh**: 4 **Cost**: 16

Modified Cargo Ship

"Outfitted for Smuggling by House Turin"

Looks like a Stock, Standard Freighter

Capabilities:

Crew:	N	Speed:	2
Maneuverability:	2	Systems:	1
Structure:	2	Weapons:	0
Sensors:	3		

Specialty Aspects:

Dozens of Hidden Compartments (Structure)

"She can build some real speed in a straight-away." (Speed)

Heavily Compartmentalized (Structure)

Features:

Space Flight – The craft is capable of flying through space.

Atmospheric Flight – The craft is capable of flying in atmosphere.

Cyber-Warfare Suite – Can make system attacks.

Crew Quarters – The ship provides living space for its crew.

Network Connectivity Suite – Wirelessly connects to local networks.

Cargo Hold – A vehicle can usually carry 2 items of a Size category one smaller than itself.

Upgraded – Adds 1 additional Capability rank.

Fated – Vehicle's Refresh is increased by +1.

Neural Interface – Gain a +1 bonus on all Skill tests related to use of the vehicle as long as you are jacked in. Also sports hostware.

Structural Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 4

System Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Crew Stress: N/A

Honey Badger

Size: 3 **Refresh**: 3 **Cost**: 14

Light Assault Warframe

Tsarya-Designed Direct Assault Platform

Not Subtle, Not Pretty, and Loud as Hell

Capabilities:

Crew:	N	Speed:	0
Maneuverability:	0	Systems:	1
Structure:	3	Weapons:	3
Sensors:	2		

Specialty Aspects:

Heavily Armored for Frontal Assault (Structure)

"Good at strafing, but don't ask her to pivot" (Maneuvering)

"The HS-47 Hornet Swarm Missile System can chase down a cat on a bobsled." (Weapons)

Features:

Armored – Vehicle gains an Armor Rating of 2.

Reinforced Structure – The vehicle gains two additional Structural Stress Boxes

Walker, Bipedal – Gains *Bipedal Walker* Aspect

Cannon – WR: +7, Range: 4

Missile Bay – Costs 1 FP, Gain +2 on attack tests, WR: +8, Range: 6

Anti-Personnel Weapons – Can target individual characters instead of attacking entire character-scale zones. WR: +7

Upgraded – Adds 1 additional Capability rank.

Structural Stress: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ **AR:** 5

System Stress: ☐☐☐☐

Crew Stress: N/A

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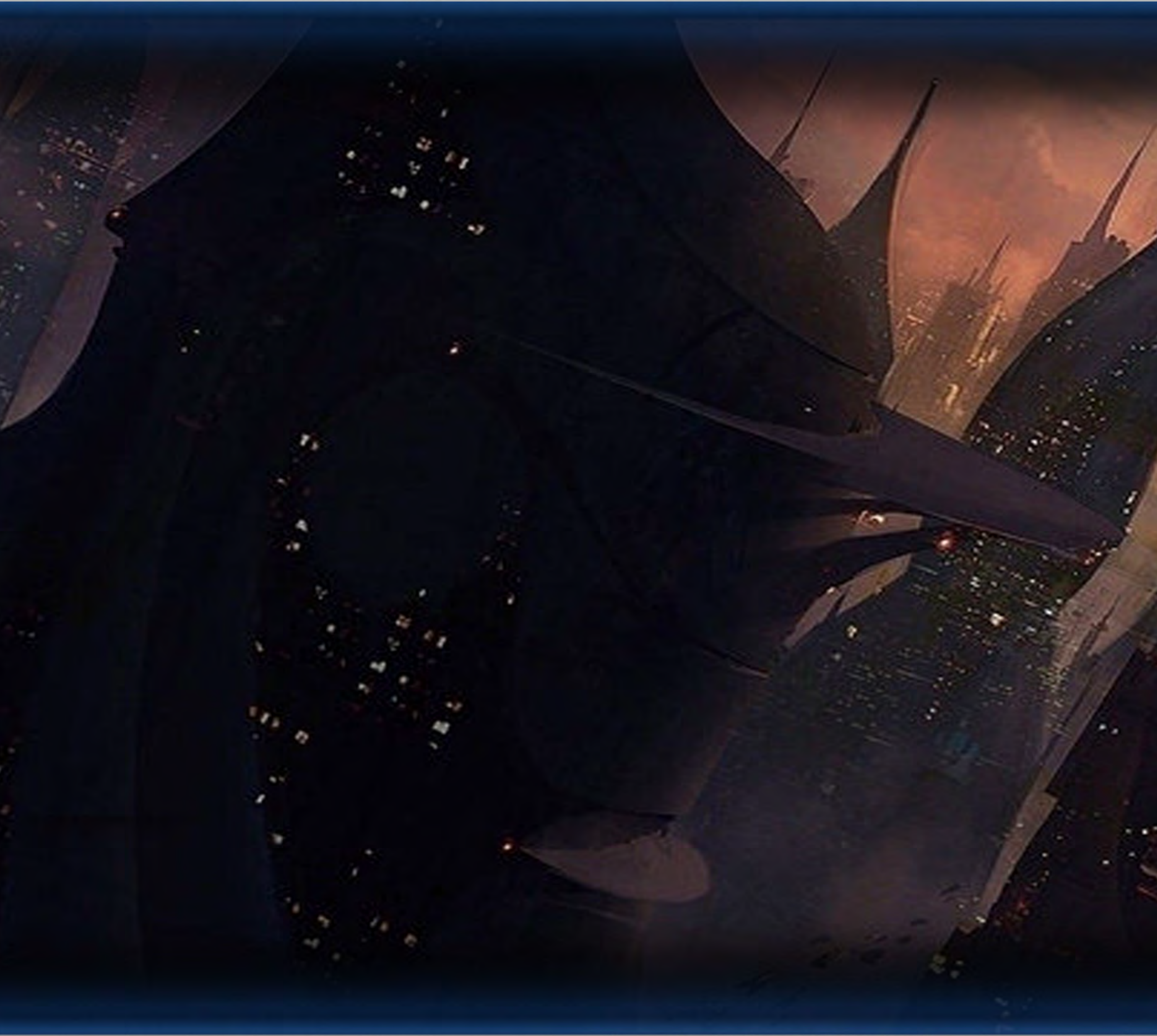

APPENDIX

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Mooks

Mooks are the nameless masses of people your characters will encounter on a day-to-day basis. For the vast majority of them, these characters don't even need a name, much less a full write-up with stats.

When you need to introduce a new NPC, simply start with a blank character sheet and fill in a few critical pieces of data—their best Skills, their most important Aspects—while leaving the rest blank. When a situation arises where the mook needs to test a Skill or use an Aspect you haven't written down, go ahead and write it down, then roll appropriately. This results in mooks getting fleshed out over time without needing to invest a lot of time up-front.

The number of stress boxes for each of a mook's Stress Tracks is calculated the same as it is for PCs. However, mooks cannot take the full complement of Consequences. They are not an important part of the story, and in a conflict they will be quickly Taken Out.

The two types of mooks, the Consequences they can take, and the number of Fate Points they get are described below:

Minor mooks are nameless guards, bartenders, back-alley thugs, and so on. Minor mooks may only elect to take a Mild Consequences to reduce stress.

Major mooks are equally nameless individuals, but serve greater roles in obstructing the PCs and challenging them. They can take two Consequences, Mild and Moderate, before being Taken Out.

Named NPCs

These characters are the most important characters in the game that aren't your PCs. A named NPC typically fills the role of one of the big bad guys, or maybe a beloved mentor.

Named NPCs should be approached with the same level of care as a new PC. They should have the full assortment of Aspects, Skills, Stunts, Consequences, equipment, and so on.

The GM's Fate Point Pool

Non-player characters do not have a Refresh Rating. Instead, they all draw from a pool of points controlled by the GM.

The GM's Fate Point pool is refreshed every scene. It contains 1 Fate Point for every mook participating in the scene, and 3 Fate Points for every named NPC.

Static Dice Rolls for Mooks

One trick for greatly increasing the speed of play during a conflict is to let the players roll all the dice. To do this, simply assume that all dice rolls required by mook characters result in "0".

This results in more predictable results all around, but allows the GM to focus his attentions more on the narrative.

NPC Only Stunts

These Stunts are not available to PCs.

Combat Training – The NPC gains a +2 bonus on all attack tests.

Multi-Attacker – The NPC gains one additional Free Action each turn, which can be used only to attack. This is common with non-humanoid creatures with multiple limbs.

Sample NPCs

Apostate Street Tough

Sleeve: None (Pure) **Size:** 0

Aspects:

- *Walking Promise of Violence*
- *"I take gold."*

Sleeve Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 3, Perception 2

Notable Skills: Firearms 2, Intimidation 3, Melee 3, Pilot 2, Resolve 2

Relevant Stunts/Augmentations: Payback

Physical Defense: AR: 1

Reinforced Clothing

Physical Attacks:

Light Rail-Pistol WR: 3

Armor Penetrating, Small, Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*

Dagger, Mono-Edged WR: 2

Small

Notes: The Payback Stunt allows the Street Tough to spend an FP to make an attack against the person who injured him or her as an Instant Action any time he or she is physically attacked and suffer a Consequence.

Cyber-Merc

Sleeve: Cybersleeve (Beta) **Size:** 0

Aspects:

- *Synthetic Biology*
- *Inhuman Appearance*

Sleeve Skills: Athletics 4, Endurance 3, Perception 1

Notable Skills: Cohesion 1, Firearms 3, Intimidation 4, Melee 2, Resolve 2

Relevant Stunts/Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Bio-Skin Sheath, Counter Attack

Physical Defense: AR: 4

Heavy Battle Armor

Physical Attacks:

Heavy Coil PDW WR: 4

Full Auto, Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*

Gravitic Baton WR: 3

Notes: The Counter Attack Stunt allows the Cyber-Merc to make a free melee attack as an Instant Action when they generate Spin on a test to defend against a melee attack, or close (same zone) ranged attack.

Security Guard

Sleeve: Biosleeve (Beta) **Size:** 0

Aspects:

- *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*

Sleeve Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 3, Perception 3

Notable Skills: Cohesion 1, Firearms 3, Intimidation 4, Melee 2, Resolve 2

Notable Stunts/Augmentations: Apotheosis, Combat Training

Physical Defense: AR: 3

Light Battle Armor

Physical Attacks:

Heavy Rail-Pistol WR: 4

Armor Penetrating, Small, Reduce WR by -2 for *Silent*

Gravitic Baton WR: 3

Notes: The Security Guard has received professional Combat Training, granting him a +2 bonus on all attack tests with ranged or melee weapons.

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Gabriel Adams

State: Biosleeve (Epsilon) **Size:** 0
Allegiance: House Silva **Rep:** 8
Character Aspects:

- *"I am a teacher of those in need, whether they appreciate it or not."*
- *"We are capable of achieving divinity."*
- *Manager of the Monolith Casino in Rho*
- *House Silva's Willing Lab Rat*
- *"I practice the art of trickery, not treachery."*
- *Apotheosized*
- *Bleeding Edge Epsilon Biosleeve*

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve, Absolutely Stunning, Synthesized Biological Perfection*

Physical Skills: Athletics 5, Endurance 5, Perception 4

Notable Skills: Guile 5, Melee 4, Networking (House) 4, Diplomacy 4, Insight 3, Strategy 3

Relevant Stunts: Agenda Celebrity, Dual Assault, Razor Tongue, Signature Item (*Bleeding Edge Epsilon Biosleeve*), Transhumanist

Augmentations: Apotheosis (Remote Backup), Exceptional Genegineering, Fibro-Muscle Weave, Medichine Factory, Neura-Surge, Performance Enhanced (x2), Pheromone Control and Sensitivity (Aura), Skinweave Armor, Striking Looks (Stunningly Gorgeous), Synthesis

Gear: Mono-Edged Dagger x2, Light PAc Pistol, Armored Suit (Reinforced Clothing), False CID, Resurrection Chamber, Resleeving Insurance

Created by Shaun Davis

Notes: Patient 87 was not the normal type of "vacationed" guest in House Silva's Research Facility on Luna. Whilst it was true he was initially placed there against his will, he found both the setting, and the testing, to his liking.

"87" became a keen participant in the rigorous body-altering regime he was exposed to by Virologist Dr. Kylie Doherty. Doherty's work with 87 resulted in a number of improvements to existing augmentation procedures, and even resulted in a few new ones…

Fieldwork began on some of the new augmentations that 87 possessed, and her prolific success caused Dr. Doherty's reputation to flourish.

Patient 87's natural charisma also won over the staff at the research facility, along with many influential benefactors within the House. Eventually the House came to consider him too valuable a commodity to keep locked away.

Gabriel Adams was born.

As an Auxiliary for House Silva in the Shadow War, Gabriel carried out numerous successful missions. Even though his methods were sometimes considered a little unusual, his continued success bought him a lot of forgiveness within the House.

Adams eventually maneuvered himself into the Silva-operated Monolith Casino in Rho, and became manager of the venue in just a few short years. Ms. Doherty, now a trusted ally, acted as his able assistant.

The Monolith gave Adams the perfect opportunity to rub shoulders with both the elite and the downtrodden, to work with the Coalition and the apostates.

He purchased his own Fray team, all the while gathering information and carrying out missions for House Silva and pursuing his personal agenda.

Gabriel's reputation and contacts have landed him a place in the upper echelon of House Silva, though he largely operates on his own. He follows his own agenda, setting up or managing deals within the Monolith

Regardless of his success and standing, Gabriel's motivation has always remained the same: the betterment of oneself and the opposition of those that hinder man's self-evolution.

The back-alley jobs that Gabriel hires crews and agents to perform not only push them physically, but also tend to put them through the psychological wringer.

In truth, Gabriel is often more interested in the process his contract-ors go through than whether or not the mission succeeds. Not everyone questions who they are, but Gabriel does. And sometimes he makes other people question whether they want to or not.

Gabriel Adams is not exceptionally tall, though he exudes charm. He mingles throughout the Monolith, always adorned in an expensive black suit, a drink in one hand and a wry smile permanently shadowing his lips.

He makes his guests feel as though they are the most important people in the room, giving them full attention no matter what the conversation.

Adams is almost always flanked by a pair of non-descript goons. His mousy assistant, Ms. Doherty, is rarely far from his side.

Greyton

State: Cybersleeve (Gamma) **Size:** 0
Allegiance: Apostate **Rep:** N
Character Aspects:

- *"For the Clan!"*
- *"We have not, and never shall, be defeated."*
- *Memories Pre-Date the Exodus*
- *A Head Full of Lifetimes*
- *"One shot is enough."*
- *Apotheosized*

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology, Inhuman Appearance, Forgotten Design*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 4, Perception 3

Notable Skills: Firearms 5, Networking (Apostate) 4, Resolve 4, Engineering (Hardware) 3, Assets 3, Cohesion 3

Relevant Stunts: Non-Citizen, Assassin Shot, Combat Reload, Fame, Marksman

Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Custom Built (*Forgotten Design*), Optimized Power System, Performance Enhanced (+1 Endurance), Reinforced Skeleton, Stillness Body Lock System

Gear: Heavy Sniper Rail-Rifle, Heavy Pac Pistol, Heavy Battle Armor (Vacuum Sealed, Shielded)

Created by Lorenz Aschaber

Notes: Greyton is a member of a long-forgotten and lost clan of assassins dating back to before the Exodus. His true age is unknown, but rumors say he is one of the oldest human minds in existence.

Greyton is a myth to most hired guns and respectable mercs. Many claim he was real, but has been dead for years. Occasionally an influential member of a House, or an exceptionally influential apostate, will threaten to loose the Grey One on their foes—most take this as an empty threat these days.

But once in a while someone sees the old and battered cybersleeve he always uses, the gray skull and the black eyes, and knows that someone is going to die soon.

His goals, like his past, are a mystery. Some speculate that the clan of assassins he came from still exists. The theory states that Greyton is just one of several assassins, all wearing the same gray skull cybersleeve and answering to the same name. Or perhaps they are all forks of the same person.

What Greyton truly is, and what his (or their) motivations are, is a popular topic often pondered by the crews fighting the Shadow War.

Sample Crew

Jace Welder, a strong-hearted and good-willed pilot, came home satisfied with his victories in Titan's speed shuttle pro circuit. Years later, after hearing that his previous record had been broken, Jace used the remainder of his winnings to purchase a salvage ship, *The Ebon Jackal,* with hopes of scouring the galaxy and scavenging ship parts to build a new shuttle that could compete with the next generation of racing shuttles.

A ship needed a crew, though, and an advert heeded the call of four strangers:

Durian Konrad, a warmonger with strong political ties and dark ambitions.

Tiver Andlat, a Savant working for the secretive organized crime syndicate within House Kimura.

Xavier Wilhelm, an idealistic apostate hoping to unite mankind regardless of race, creed, or state.

Christov Draiku, a SIM with an obsession with programming and cooking.

Blinded by his eagerness and good faith, Jace accepted all onboard with no thoughts of what these strangers' true goals might actually be.

Jace Welder

State: Pure **Size:** 0
Allegiance: Apostate **Rep:** N
Character Aspects:

- *"Records were meant to be broken, no matter the cost."*
- *"A memory lasts a lifetime, a legacy lasts forever."*
- *Corporate Sponsors and Fellow Racers*
- *Out of Place When out of Space*
- *"This next maneuver would probably kill us all if it was anyone but me doing it..."*
- *Scar Across Left Eye*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 2, Perception 3
Notable Skills: Pilot 5, Resolve 4, Engineering (Hardware) 4, Networking (Apostate) 3, Firearms 3, Education 3
Relevant Stunts: Carpe Diem, At Home Behind the Stick, Refreshed, Signature Item (*The Ebon Jackle*), Skilled (Education)
Gear: Light PAc Pistol, Light Battle Armor (Computer Gauntlet, Alpha Agent), Light Rail-Pistol, Backpack, Flashlight, Credisk, *The Ebon Jackle*

Created by Andrew Demetriou

Durian Konrad

State: Biosleeve (Delta) **Size:** 0
Allegiance: House Silva **Rep:** 6
Character Aspects:

- *"A few simple words can easily get me what I want."*
- *A Necessary Evil, a Bringer of Balance*
- *Ties to Apostate Arms Dealers*
- *Distrusted by Superiors*
- *"You shouldn't have shown a weakness so easy to exploit!"*
- *Apotheosized*

Sleeve Aspects: *Gene-Fixed Biosleeve*
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 4, Perception 5
Notable Skills: Diplomacy 5, Guile 4, Networking (House) 4, Resolve 4, Assets 3, Cohesion 3, Education 3
Relevant Stunts: Genius at Work, Razor Tongue, Licensed, Skilled (Diplomacy)
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Cosmetic Customization, Exceptional Genengin-eering, Emergency Life Support System
Gear: Light Assault Armor (Vacuum Sealed and Shielded, Air Pack, Thermal Regulation System, Reinforced Cyber-Musculature, Jump Jets, Hydrostatic Gel Layer), Frag Grenade x3, Heavy Rail Pistol, PPC (Beta), White business suit with purple silk tie, white loafers

Created by Kalem Murray

Xavier Wilhelm

State: Pure **Size:** 0
Allegiance: House Cipriani **Rep:** 4
Character Aspects:

- *"Divided we fall."*
- *"Humanity must stand together."*
- *Uranian, Born and Raised Among the Apostates of the Colony*
- *"Suffer not the traitor."*
- *"Outdated doesn't mean useless."*
- *Tall and Proud*

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 3, Perception 2

Notable Skills: Firearms 4, Melee 4, Insight 4, Cohesion 3, Resolve 3, Stealth 3, Diplomacy 3
Relevant Stunts: Carpe Diem, Assassin Strike, Cover of Darkness, Licensed, Five Minute Friends,
Gear: Light Battle Armor (Jump Jets), Mono-Edged Short Sword, Light Rail-Pistol, Smoke Grenade, Knife, PPC (Alpha Agent)

Created by Shae Hercelinskyj

Tiver Andlat

State: Cybersleeve (Jinsoku) **Size:** 0
Allegiance: House Kimura **Rep:** 4
Character Aspects:

- *"One day I'll captain this ship."*
- *Surprise Is Everything*
- *The Family Business Was Black Market Smuggling*
- *Confidence Is a Double-Edged Sword*
- *"I can get us in."*
- *Apotheosized*
- *Speaks with an Odd Accent*

Sleeve Aspects: *Synthetic Biology, Inhuman Appearance, Auditory Amp and Filtering Module (P), Beholder Sensory Suite(P), Stealth Mods(P)*
Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Endurance 2, Perception 4

Notable Skills: Engineering (Software) 4, Insight 4, Stealth 4, Guile 3, Melee 3, Research 3, SINC 2
Relevant Stunts: Savant, Esper Lord, Eminent Domain, Skilled (SINC)
Augmentations: Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Auditory Amp and Filtering Module, Beholder Sensory Suite, Custom Built (*Top of the Line Stealth Mods*)
Gear: Mono-Edged Short Sword, Plasti-Rope Dispenser, Spider Gear Kit

Created by Jordan Matts

Christov Draiku

State: SIM **Size:** 0
Allegiance: House Tsarya **Rep:** 4
Character Aspects:

- *Dreams of Becoming a Celebrity Chef*
- *"All ingredients have their use. It just depends on the dish."*
- *"I know a guy on Shouye who can get us what we need."*
- *Strongly Dislikes Leaving His Home Environment*
- *The ship is my body. The security system my eyes, and the galley my heart."*
- *Apotheosized*
- *SIM State (P)*

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Endurance 3, Perception 2

Notable Skills: Insight 4, Research 4, Engineering (Software) 4, Education 3, Resolve 3, Strategy 3
Relevant Stunts: SIM State, Artist (*Rising Star in the Culinary World*), Geek Speak, System Slip
Gear: Black Gate Series III Cerberus Drone

Created by Danial Merrifield

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GAME TERM GLOSSARY

Aspect: An Aspect is a word, phrase, quote, or sentence that describes some particular trait of a person, place, or thing. You can spend a Fate Point (FP) to draw attention to (invoke) a particular Aspect, or gain an FP when an Aspect harms (compels) you.

Aspects are generally written in italics in this book. (pg. 108)

Assessment: You may use your Skills to study a person, place, or thing in an effort to discover Aspects it may have. (pg. 116)

Armor Rating (AR): Armor, shields, and some Augmentations grant an Armor Rating. If you are successfully hit with an attack, your AR is subtracted from the amount of stress you would suffer. (pg. 194)

Campaign: A series of game sessions strung together to form a shared and evolving story.

Character Aspect: An Aspect that describes who a character is. It answers the questions of where they are from, their outlook on life, their guiding principles, etc. (pg. 154)

Concession: You may end a conflict by conceding, offering your opponent your terms of concession in exchange for your safety. (pg. 121)

Consequences: Instead of suffering stress on your Stress Track, you may elect to take a special kind of Aspect called a Consequence. There are four types of Consequence: Mild, Moderate, Severe(P), and Extreme(P). (pg. 120)

Declaration: You may use a Skill or Aspect to Declare some fact about the setting, or apply an Aspect to some part of it. (pg. 117)

Determination: The "armor" used in mental conflicts. Determination ratings derive from the defender's motivation and morale. (pg. 127)

Difficulty (Diff): The number that your total Effort must meet or exceed to successfully perform an action. (pg. 103)

Edge: The "weapon" used in mental conflicts. Edge ratings are granted from exceptional role-playing or cleverness on the part of the attackers. (pg. 127)

Effect Aspect: A short-lived Aspect created as a result of generating Spin or Stalling on a Skill test, attack test, or defense test. (pg. 106)

Effort: The result of making a test. Effort is calculated by rolling dice, adding relevant the Skill and any modifiers.

Equipment Rating (ER): The bonus a piece of equipment grants you when using it to aid you in performing an action. (pg. 194)

Fate Point (FP): Fate Points are used as narrative currency. They can be spent to invoke or compel an Aspect of a particular person, place, or thing. (pg. 108)

Game Master (GM): The GM helps the group tell a story by devising the plot, background, setting, and enemies. The GM also plays the roles of NPCs and enemies.

Initiative: A test that takes place at the start of a conflict, determining the order in which the acting characters get to take their turns. (pg. 124)

Invoke (an Aspect): Spend a Fate Point to make an Aspect impact your character in a positive way. (pg. 109)

Maneuver: An action taken to place an Aspect on yourself, another character, an object, zone, or the scene. (pg. 115)

Melee Attack: An attack made against an opponent with your fists, feet, knives, spears, or other handheld weapons.

Milestone: After a certain number of game sessions, players gain the option to change certain things about their characters and gain new Stunts. (pg. 159)

Mook: Mooks are the faceless masses of characters the PCs might interact with, but do not play major roles in the story. One may be the bartender, the crossing guard, or one of the local farmers. They tend to have simplified statistics and are Taken Out much more easily than PCs or Named NPCs. (pg. 253)

Named NPC: These NPCs are the other major characters in the story besides the PCs. They could be a PC's boss, a major ally, or enemy. (pg. 253)

Non-Player Character (NPC): Characters under the control of the GM; the cast of people on the fringe of the story. NPCs are either mooks or Named NPCs.

Persistent Aspects "(P)": These Aspects impact a person, place, thing, or scene to such a degree that they can be invoked or compelled for free. It does not cost a Fate Point to invoke a Persistent Aspect for a bonus or reroll, and no one gets a Fate Point if it is compelled. Invoking or compelling a Persistent Aspect to make a Declaration still costs a Fate Point. (pg. 113)

Persistent Aspects are denoted with a (P) at the end of the Aspect's name.

Player: One of the people playing in the game that is not the Game Master.

Player Character (PC): The imaginary person that a player acts as in the game, created from your imagination using the rules found in this book as a guide. You control this character, making their decisions to help them overcome their obstacles.

Ranged Attack: An attack made with a pistol, assault rifle, thrown spear, or any other type of ranged weapon.

Refresh: A period during play, usually at the start of the game session, where the GM grants you an allotment of Fate Points equal to your Refresh Rating (pg. 108).

Refresh Rating: The number of FPs you get during a Refresh.

Round: A round consists of about three seconds of in-game time. During that time, each character in the scene gets a turn.

Scene: Action is broken up into scenes, much like in a movie. Many types of scenes exist: interaction scenes, action scenes, chase scenes, etc. The exact length of a scene varies, but one generally begins and ends when there is a significant shift in the story's focus or a change in the setting.

Scope: Aspects fall into certain categories called scopes. You may only invoke one Aspect from each scope per test. (pg. 108)

Session: A game session. The time you and your friends devote to playing the game on a given day.

Shift: The amount by which you succeed on a test. For example, if the test has a difficulty of 3, and the Effort you generate is 5, you've succeeded with 2 Shifts.

Skill: Your Skills paint a picture of your character, defining his training or innate aptitude for certain tasks. Every Skill has an associated rank, determining its strength. (pg. 157)

Spin: When you generate three or more Shifts, you generate Spin. Spin indicates that you succeeded with finesse, precision, style, and/or flare. Spin can result in an Effect Aspect (pg. 106).

Stall: When your total Effort falls short of the difficulty by three or more, you have Stalled. Stall indicates that you failed spectacularly. Spin can result in an Effect Aspect (pg. 106).

Stress Track: A Stress Track is used to track the amount of stress you have taken, measured in stress boxes. Once all the stress boxes in a track have been filled, you are Taken Out. You may elect to take Consequences to reduce the amount of stress suffered from an attack. (pg. 120)

Stunt: These attributes further define what your character can do. While Skills cover your natural talents and/or training, Stunts represent the exceptional ways you've learned to use them. (pg. 158)

Taken Out: The exact nature of being Taken Out depends largely on what type of conflict you lost. For a physical conflict, it could mean a coma or even death; while for a mental conflict, you could be reduced to a gibbering vegetable. (pg. 123)

Test: A test is a simple roll of the dice, plus your relevant Skill and any additional modifiers, compared to a difficulty rating set by the GM. Your result is called your Effort.

Temporary Aspect: An Aspect that goes away with time. Temporary Aspects go away after they are intentionally removed or something happens to remove them. (pg. 113)

Turn: Your chance to act during a round.

Weapon Rating (WR): Weapons and some Savant Programs have a Weapon Rating. After you successfully attack your enemy, this bonus is added to the amount of stress your target suffers. (pg. 194)

Zone: The area in which a physical conflict takes place is divided into zones by the GM. Zones usually have clearly defined boundaries, such as walls or changes in elevation, and are sized based on the scale of the conflict (pg. 150).

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SPECIAL THANKS

Nova Praxis was published as a direct result of a successful Kickstarter campaign. That campaign was funded by the following generous egos, all of which have Void Star's sincerest thanks.

OPPORTUNIST

RetrO
Ignite LLC
Ernesto Ramirez
Jim Ryan

FORWARD THINKER

wraith808
Andrew Hayford
Duane Moore
Mikhail Gordin
Daniel Jackson
DysonFountain
Pierre Toulouze
simon
Michael W. Mattei
Michael Thompson
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robert gonia
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Robin Hermansson
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Manu Marron
Gianadda
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Angelo Pileggi
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Lourentius te Beest
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NEURAL NETWORK

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Seth
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Paul Echeverri
Raymond Anderson
Aaron W
Alice

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Eoin Burke
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Taiyri
Daniel Jacobsson
Marcello Pellegrino
Kurt McMahon
Steven Sick
Lauri Hirvonen
Justin Hukle
Sherwin Jones
Ben Higginbottom
David Dorward
jasonkurtz
Dave Ellingwood
Ben

FULL-SYNTHESIS TRANSHUMAN

Jochen Linnemann
Robert Kim
Carl Walter
walterhisownself
Basileus
Kirk Foote
Jacob Trewe
Richard Harrison
e.carletti
Christian Nord
Ray Duell
Simon Stroud
Kevin Schantz
Mark Solino
Markus Raab
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Aidan Domogalla
Edgar
Scott Henry
Roger Eberhart
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Robert Loper
Gregory Matyola
Travis Enright
Paul West
Matt Rollefson
Drew Arrigoni
Alvin Uthke
Sleet
marcus
Arcane Snowman
Beebo_Whatzitz
J Phillips
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Leath Sheales
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Cameron Hattrick
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Andrew Hurley
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Eloy Cintron
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ASCENSION CULT

Alexander W. Hanson

TRANSCENDENT BEING

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John Lambert
Andrew Walker
jason

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Michael O'Neill
Kalem
Mario Meo

HERALDS OF THE SINGULARITY

The Heralds of the Singularity went above and beyond.

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Michael Ramsey
David Sarachman
Lorenz Aschaber
Terry Colligan
Aaron Roudabush
Michael Richards
Travis Enright
Brian Lavelle
Neil Ford
Colin Fredericks
Gareth Lawrence
Max Kaehn
Jeff Scifert
Martin Dickson
Marzio Ombra
Che Webster
Liam Bourret-Nyffeler
Barry Sheppard
Ernesto Ramirez
Jacob Trewe
Tony Popowski
Anderland
Simon Berström
Mario Meo
Jonathan McCulley
Justin Loudermilk
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Damien Swallow
runester
Jimmy Plamondon
Seung Han
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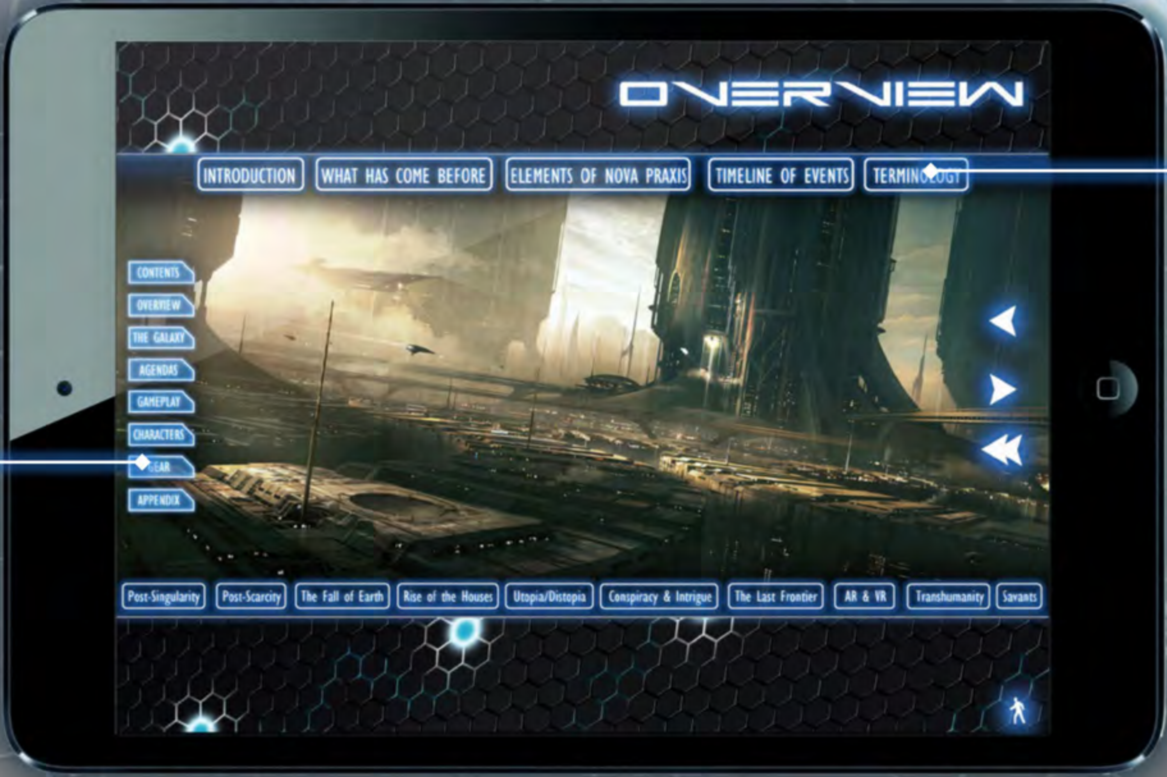
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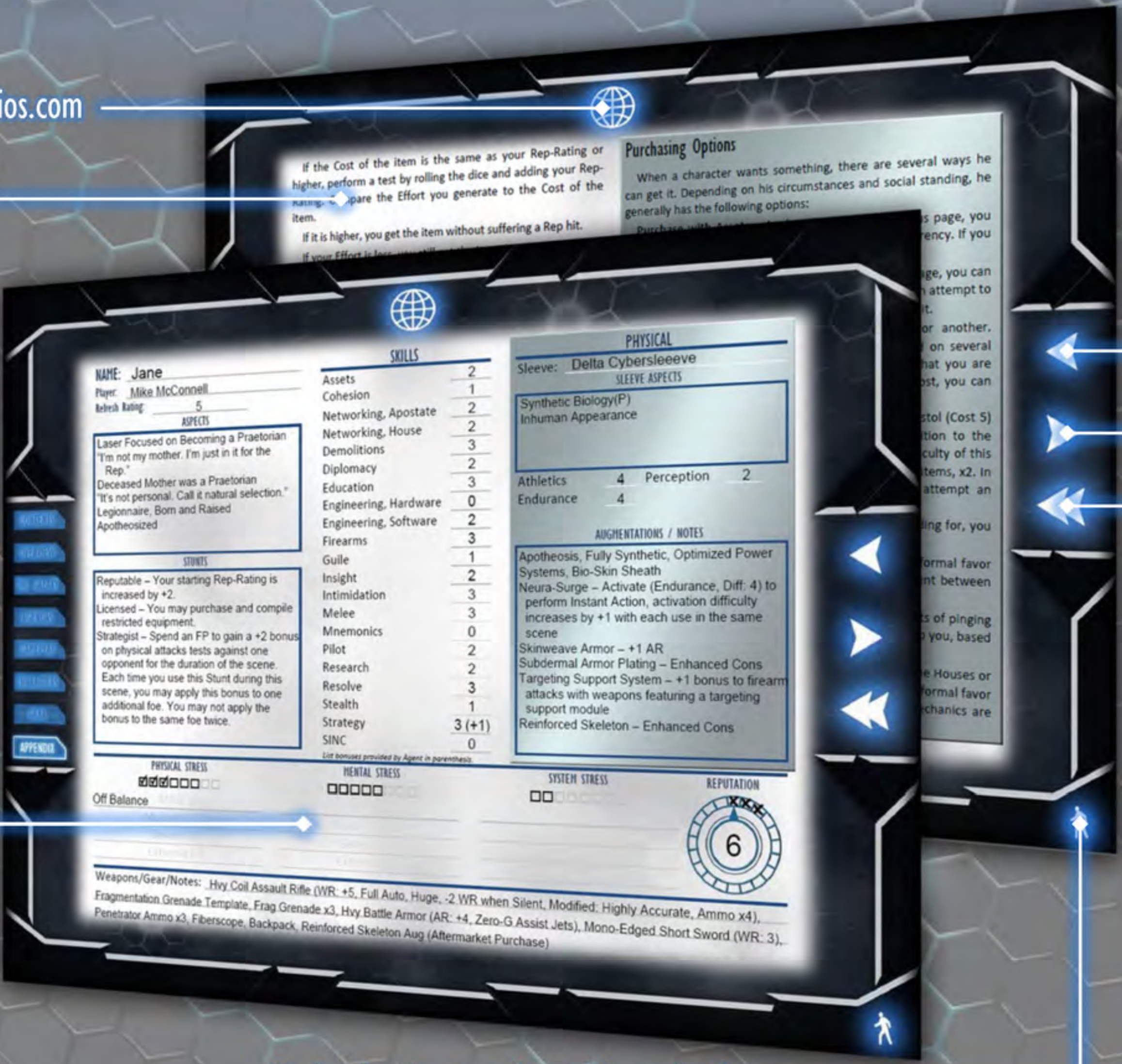

If the Cost of the item is the same as your Rep-Rating or higher, perform a test by rolling the dice and adding your Rep-Rating. Compare the Effort you generate to the Cost of the item.

If it is higher, you get the item without suffering a Rep hit.

Purchasing Options

When a character wants something, there are several ways he can get it. Depending on his circumstances and social standing, he generally has the following options:

NAME: Jane
Player: Mike McConnell
Refresh Rating: 5

ASPECTS

Laser Focused on Becoming a Praetorian
"I'm not my mother. I'm just in it for the Rep."
Deceased Mother was a Praetorian
"It's not personal. Call it natural selection."
Legionnaire, Born and Raised
Apotheosized

STUNTS

Reputable – Your starting Rep-Rating is increased by +2.
Licensed – You may purchase and compile restricted equipment.
Strategist – Spend an FP to gain a +2 bonus on physical attacks tests against one opponent for the duration of the scene. Each time you use this Stunt during this scene, you may apply this bonus to one additional foe. You may not apply the bonus to the same foe twice.

SKILLS	
Assets	2
Cohesion	1
Networking, Apostate	2
Networking, House	2
Demolitions	3
Diplomacy	2
Education	3
Engineering, Hardware	0
Engineering, Software	2
Firearms	3
Guile	1
Insight	2
Intimidation	3
Melee	3
Mnemonics	0
Pilot	2
Research	2
Resolve	3
Stealth	1
Strategy	3 (+1)
SINC	0

List bonuses provided by Agent in parenthesis.

PHYSICAL

Sleeve: Delta Cybersleeeve

SLEEVE ASPECTS

Synthetic Biology(P)
Inhuman Appearance

Athletics	4	Perception	2
Endurance	4		

AUGMENTATIONS / NOTES

Apotheosis, Fully Synthetic, Optimized Power Systems, Bio-Skin Sheath
Neura-Surge – Activate (Endurance, Diff: 4) to perform Instant Action, activation difficulty increases by +1 with each use in the same scene
Skinweave Armor – +1 AR
Subdermal Armor Plating – Enhanced Cons
Targeting Support System – +1 bonus to firearm attacks with weapons featuring a targeting support module
Reinforced Skeleton – Enhanced Cons

PHYSICAL STRESS
☑☑☑☐☐☐☐
Off Balance

MENTAL STRESS
☐☐☐☐☐

SYSTEM STRESS
☐☐

REPUTATION
6

Weapons/Gear/Notes: Hvy Coil Assault Rifle (WR: +5, Full Auto, Huge, -2 WR when Silent, Modified: Highly Accurate, Ammo x4), Fragmentation Grenade Template, Frag Grenade x3, Hvy Battle Armor (AR: +4, Zero-G Assist Jets), Mono-Edged Short Sword (WR: 3), Penetrator Ammo x3, Fiberscope, Backpack, Reinforced Skeleton Aug (Aftermarket Purchase)

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NOVA PRAXIS
Mike McConnell

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NOVA PRAXIS

NAME:
Player:
Refresh Rating:

ASPECTS

STUNTS

SKILLS

Assets
Cohesion
Networking, Apostate
Networking, House
Demolitions
Diplomacy
Education
Engineering, Hardware
Engineering, Software
Firearms
Guile
Insight
Intimidation
Melee
Mnemonics
Pilot
Research
Resolve
Stealth
Strategy
SINC

List bonuses provided by Agent in parenthesis.

PHYSICAL

Sleeve:

SLEEVE ASPECTS

Athletics
Perception
Endurance

AUGMENTATIONS / NOTES

PHYSICAL STRESS

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Mild(-2)
Moderate (-4)
Severe (-6)
Extreme (-8)

MENTAL STRESS

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Mild(-2)
Moderate (-4)
Severe (-6)
Extreme (-8)

SYSTEM STRESS

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Mild(-2)
Moderate (-4)
Severe (-6)
Extreme (-8)

REPUTATION

Gear/Lasting Aspects/Notes:

NOVA PRAXIS

Step 1 — Select 5 Aspects

"A" is for "Ambition" – What are your goals? What drives you to put your life, reputation, and sanity on the line?

"B" is for "Belief" – What do you believe in? What philosophies guide your actions and make you the person you are?

"C" is for "Connection" – What person, place, or event still plays a large role in your life? Is there someone you can always depend on? Was there an event in your life that made you who you are?

"D" is for "Disadvantage" – Why haven't you achieved your goals already? What weaknesses, addictions, compulsions, or challenges stand in your way?

"E" is for "Expertise" – What are you good at? How do you go about overcoming obstacles? In a broad sense, what methods do you employ to succeed in life?

Step 2 — Determine Starting State

Pure

State Benefits: You have 8 Skill Ranks to distribute among the Athletics, Endurance, and Perception Skills (max rank in a single Skill is 5). You also gain an additional Aspect that must be used to describe some physical trait related to your body.

Your Refresh Rating is increased by +2.

You also gain the Carpe Diem (pg. 167) Stunt, and may increase your rating in any one non-Physical Skill by +1. You may not use this bonus to increase a Skill rank above 5.

You lose all State Benefits of being Pure (including the Skill bonus) if you take the Apotheosis Aug (pg. 213).

SIM

State Benefits: You have 7 Skill Ranks to distribute among Athletics, Endurance, and Perception Skills. (The max rank in a single Skill is 5). While you obviously do not have a physical body, these Skills allow you to interact with virtual objects.

You gain the SIM State (pg. 174) Stunt and one of the following Stunts for free: Digitally Evolved, Digital Spider, Drone Jock, Infusion, Skilled (SINC), or System Slip.

Sleeved

State Benefits: You begin play with a biosleeve or cybersleeve with a Cost no greater than the higher of your Assets or Rep-Rating, +4.

Later steps in the character creation process will guide you through determining your Assets and Rep-Rating.

See page 209 for more on sleeves.

Step 3 — Pick Skill Set

Specialist	Expert	Generalist
One Rank 5	Three Rank 4	Seven Rank 3
Two Rank 4	Three Rank 3	Eight Rank 2
Two Rank 3	Four Rank 2	Three Rank 1
Three Rank 2	Six Rank 1	
Six Rank 1		

Skills

Assets
Cohesion
Networking, Apostate
Networking, House
Demolitions
Diplomacy
Education
Engineering, Hardware
Engineering, Software
Firearms
Guile
Insight
Intimidation
Melee
Mnemonics
Pilot
Research
Resolve
Stealth
Strategy

Physical Skills

Athletics
Endurance
Perception

Special Skill

SINC

Rank 5: __________

Rank 4: __________

Rank 3: __________

Rank 2: __________

Rank 1: __________

Step 4 — Select Stunts

You begin play with 3 Stunts. See pg. 165

Step 5 — Determine Allegiance

House: As a House member you can acquire certain items at a discount, reducing the Cost of these items by -1. The Houses, and the items discounted, are described starting on page 85.

Apostate: you may not make use of any House discounts, but you get the Non-Citizen Stunt (pg. 172) for free.

Step 6 - Determine Rep-Rating

You start with a Rep-Rating equal to your House Networking Skill +2. You also immediately gain a bump with a Value equal to your Diplomacy.

Step 7 - Determine Starting Gear

First, gain a single item with a Cost equal to your choice of Assets or Rep-Rating, +2. Decrease -1 for each subsequent purchase. Max restricted items equals Assets +1.

Cost 9: __________

Cost 8: __________

Cost 7: __________

Cost 6: __________

Cost 5: __________

Cost 4: __________

Cost 3: __________

Cost 2: __________

Cost 1: __________

Step 8 — Stress Boxes.

Each track has 2 boxes, plus a number of bonus boxes depending on your rank in certain Skills. For each of your relevant Skills ranked 1 to 2, add one additional box. For each Skill ranked 3 to 4 add two additional boxes. A rank of 5 or higher adds three boxes. The Physical Stress Track also gets a number of additional boxes equal to your Size.

Stress Track	Relevant Skills
Physical:	Athletics & Endurance + Size
Mental:	Cohesion & Resolve
System (Savant only):	Engineering (Software) & SINC

THE POWER OF FATE UNLEASHED!

STRANDS OF FATE
Mike McConnell

Strands of Fate contains everything you need to tell stories of adventure, action, horror, and intrigue set in any genre. Whether it's classic fantasy, urban mystery, dashing super heroes, or far future action, this book is your guide. Strands utilizes the award winning FATE roleplaying game system and provides the Game Master with all the tools he needs to get any campaign, of any genre or power level, off the ground and running in minutes.

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  Dozens of new Advantages, Modifiers and Meta-Powers
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- Power Sources: Detailed explorations of a number of Power Sources, advice for purchasing Powers to match their Power Source. Power Sources include: Arcane Magic, Cybernetic Augmentations, Dark Gifts, Divine Magic, Psychic Talent, & Tech Savant Programs
- Power Applications: Dozens of Powers, pre-defined with Modifiers and Meta-Powers, created to simulate spells, psychic talents, cybernetic augmentations, etc. These both save time during character creation, and serve as inspiration for your creations.
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